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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SACRIFICE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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SACRIFICE did not originate in Israel, least of all in the religion known as the Old Testament preparatory stage of our Christian faith. It is as old as religious life in man, as the history of man. Its origin lies beyond the period in which the religions of primitive peoples developed into distinct types—even as the Old Testament narrative begins its history of mankind outside of Paradise with the dual sacrifice of the first brothers. Far back as the historian can look into the past, childish and barbaric as the religious life often discloses itself to him, sacrifice is never missing. In fact, in most cases it may be said, "sacrifice is religion"—sacrifice in its widest sense meaning "performances and gifts rendered in honor of the deity," and sacrifice in the narrower sense, as exclusively employed in this article, "the offering of gifts upon the altar for the use of the deity."

At the very outset, therefore, we must reject the idea that revealed religion by its own genius produced the forms of sacrifice found in the Old Testament. When the peculiar life of religion which developed into Christianity began in Israel, sacrifice had been the obvious center of religious life for ages immemorial, and the thoughts expressed therein were nowhere doubted and needed no explanation. Israel simply took the

sacrificial usages from more ancient culture and more childlike forms of religious life. Our task consists solely in understanding how the sacrificial idea developed in the religion of the Old Testament. A study of the history of sacrifice in primitive periods of mankind naturally cannot be undertaken here. We simply presume the acknowledged and clear results concerning that early history. A grateful reference can be made to the work of Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, the last conclusions of which probably transcend the possibilities of actual proof, but which, concerning all here presupposed, gives reliable and comprehensive information.

Then again we must not forget that the religion of ancient Israel, like all religions before the awakening of a specific theological interest, does not deal with theories or dogmas, but with facts and actions. It does not require a specific meaning to be connected with the act. It enjoins only the act. It asks that the community neglect nothing possible to secure the favor and aid, and to protect against the displeasure and wrath, of the deity. This naturally could not occur among a civilized, cultured people without the formation in religious circles of more or less definite ideas about the effects and purpose of such acts. But there was room for different explanations, and none was looked upon as demanded by religion, and none seemed inadmissible. Fixed dogmas, in our sense of the term, no more existed than did a coherent religious doctrine. The conceptions were fluid and figurative, rooted more in feeling and fancy than in thought. If only the acts were properly performed, and nothing in the performer's habit of life directly contradicted them, then the religions of antiquity left to the individual all accompanying feelings and thoughts. Thus with the same people the same religious acts may frequently have received different explanations, and the conceptions connected therewith may have changed with altered religious conditions, and without any clear perception of such changes or transposition into a specifically new doctrine. And the earliest and most potent sentiments—such as, for instance, that of the sacredness of sacrificial blood—can, in the nature of the case, be least reproduced in clear statements.

The character of the "mysterion," which cannot be fully dissolved with thought, will always adhere to them. Like acts do not prove like conceptions. And commonly recognized usages do not presuppose a clearly defined doctrine.

Before the religion of Israel was elevated to its loftier development by the spiritual energy of the great prophets from the eighth century on, the cult centering in sacrifice was undoubtedly the real essence of popular religious life. Sacrifice appears in manifold forms and vivid representations. From the simple sacrifices of Gideon and Manoah, the expression of their personal religious life (Judg., chaps. 6; 13; 14), to the splendid royal sacrifices described in 1 Kings 19:21; from the sacrifices offered to express personal gratitude or to perform a vow, to the sacrificial feasts of the tribes in their family seats (1 Sam. 20:6) or the anniversaries at popular sanctuaries (1 Sam. 1:1); from the joyous harvest festivals (Judg. 9:21) and coronation offerings (1 Sam., chap. 11), to the terrible sacrificial tributes in calamities of war (Judg., chap. 11), we see the popular life of early Israel permeated by sacrifice. And the denunciations and exhortations of the prophets plainly enough show that the people naïvely expected to secure or regain the favor of their God by means of sacrificial gifts. How were sacrifices rendered in Israel in those times, and what expectations entered into their performance?

We find, first, sacrificial acts which in Israel's religion appear to be half-understood and partly transformed survivals of a past in other respects outgrown by the people, rites immediately leading us into the religious life of related Semitic tribes, especially of the Arabs. They naturally cannot teach anything about the Old Testament conception of sacrifice. But they usher us into a circle of ideas explanative of the popular attitude of Israel toward sacrifice.

In this particular I think primarily of sacrifices which appear as the basis of covenants. In the early narrative, Gen. 15:9 f., and in the presentation of the prophet Jeremiah (34:18 f.) we are met by the practice of covenanters passing between the halves of victims, placed opposite to each other, and thus by

an oath-like act pledging themselves sacredly to keep the covenant.¹ The complete form of the rite is intelligible from the narrative Exod. 24:4-8. Here one-half of the sacrificial blood is sprinkled upon the altar of God, thus dedicated to him, and the other upon the congregation as "blood of the covenant." Thereby the covenant is considered solemnly sanctioned on the basis of "obligations." The "blood of the covenant" (Zech. 9:11) unites God with his people. This transaction can only be explained by the conviction, manifest in all of the earliest sacrificial customs, that the blood of the victim, as the life of the animal, establishes a *communion of life*. As in other places the covenant is consummated by a common meal (salt), by exchange of dress (1 Sam. 18:3), or by mixture of the blood of the participants—both parties always symbolically combining in one life—so here the sacrificial blood effects a like communion between God and man. As hospitality is regarded sacred, since by partaking of the common meal the guest, as it were, has become a member of the kin, so are the covenanters "holy one to the other." Thus Saul's house is forfeited to the curse of God, because he broke the covenant of Israel with the Gibeonites (2 Sam., chap. 21). Israel and its God have made the covenant by sacrifice (Ps. 50:5). We here see the primitive conception of the effect of sacrificial blood. It binds together, makes one life out of two persons. The victim dies, not as one punished, nor as an expiation for sin, but that its life may become a sacred sacramental covenant uniting God with the congregation of his people. The question whether the earliest races of man regarded the blood of domestic animals as directly a part of the life-blood common to the clan and its deity, to be protected by the clan through blood-revenge, does not enter into consideration as touching Israel's religious conceptions. It cannot be regarded proven, even after Robertson Smith's brilliant presentation. But that this blood is looked upon as the life of the animal, and therefore withheld from profane use and reserved solely for sacred service at the altar of God, is from the beginning for Israel a self-evident assumption receiving no further thought. This

¹ Compare victims as witnesses of the oath (7, **וְשִׁבְעָה**), Gen. 21:28 ff.

appears as the condition for the use of animal's flesh right after the great flood (Gen. 9: 1-6), and is emphasized in connection with the absolute sanctity of human blood, from which follows the command of blood-revenge.² And in Deuteronomy (12: 16 f.), as well as in the Priestly Law (Lev. 17: 10 ff.), the self-evident basis of sacrificial law is: "The blood is the life."

This conception appears as a primitive possession of humanity widely spread among the nations. The savage drinks the enemy's blood in order to absorb his vigor, as the shades in Homer again speak after partaking blood. The Arabs at their holiest sacrifice, that of the sacred camel, ate the flesh with the sacrificial blood in order to unite with each other and with the deity. In "blood-brotherhood" two persons become one—as already the common food makes them "one body" for a given period. The priests and mystagogues of Canaanitish cults in their rites by the shedding of blood unite with their god or with the dead (1 Kings 18: 28; cf. Lev. 19: 28; 21: 5; Deut. 14: 1; Jer. 16: 6). Likewise the hair, being a living growth, is widely regarded as an article of consecration to the deity, among Romans and Greeks as among oriental nations (Amos 8: 10; Lev. 19: 27; Deut. 14: 1; Jer. 16: 6; 25: 23; Ezek. 7: 18; 44: 20). Tattooing also belongs under this head (Lev. 19: 28; 21: 5). And upon the same basis surely rests the primitive Hebrew custom of the Nazarite, in which the hair is consecrated to the deity, and therefore until the termination of the vow must remain inviolate (Numb., chap. 6). Likewise circumcision, by means of which, according to the strange ancient narrative, Exod. 4: 24, the one circumcised (?) becomes a "bridegroom of blood" (חֵתֵן דָּמִים).

The Passover custom leads us into the same category of ideas. True, in the Levitical law, the Passover is but a sacred meal commemorative of the delivery out of Egypt. The sacrifices connected therewith pertain only to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The ancient sacred usages of the festive meal are

² Blood-revenge (Gen. 9: 27, 45; 1 Sam. 2: 27; 14: 7) is fundamental law. "Crying of the blood unto God" (Gen. 4: 10; Job 16: 18) is a religious application of this view. It must also be noted that flesh food is regarded as originally insonant with nature (Gen. 1: 28; 2: 16).

appended in a purely historical manner to "the passing over of the destroyer" (פסח) and the restless haste of the exodus. Yet in Deuteronomy (16:2) all the sacrifices of the entire festal period are still called פסח. And a comparison with the Arabic sacrifices in the month of *Rajab*, and with the usages of Haran, Cyprus, and "Hierapolis,"³ shows that the rite itself goes back to old Hebrew customs and to a period when Israel as a nation of herdsmen offered the firstlings of its flocks to God and besought his favor for the coming year. Sin, in its proper sense, was never thought of in the Passover, nor even according to the later conception. It was originally a sacred consecration designed to secure the gracious forbearance of God. And, according to the rigorous perception of primitive times, this consecration must have possessed the character of an immolatory offering.

In the Passover the kin, the members of the household, still unite in the old manner for sacramental action. That fact alone relegates this celebration to the earliest ages, before the thought of the nation or of the religious community had supplanted the sense of the natural unity of kindred. The members of the household unite with each other and with the deity at a festive meal. The sacrificial blood consecrates the household as one united with God. It is thereby protected against the wrath of the deity. The "blood of forbearance" secures unto the kindred the protection of their god and his favor for the coming year. Therefore the meal is "holy." The victim must remain inviolate. No part thereof may pass into decay (Exod. 12:8 ff., 43-46). Only "the circumcised," the ones united with God through the consecrating blood, may sit at the sacred table (vs. 43). Thus the Passover is in a sense a miniature of the covenant meal at which the union of the community with God is always newly strengthened for the commencing year for protection against his wrath.

Blood, by its capacity of uniting with God, has a consecrative and cleansing power. The particular ethical conception of sin was in earliest times undoubtedly foreign to Israel as to other ancient nations. They had not yet abandoned the

³ Cf. W. ROBERTSON SMITH, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 387.

natural thought of "uncleanness." And uncleanness on its part has still a strange connection with the conception of "holiness." That is *holy* which has entered into so close a union with the deity, and is so permeated by his majesty, that it may no longer serve the purposes of ordinary life. That which divine powers have touched is unto the unconsecrated person fatal and terrible, "as if charged with electric forces" (W. Robertson Smith). Whosoever touches it becomes "holy," *i. e.*, falls under the ban. Whosoever sees God must die. Whosoever touches his holy ark, even if actuated by good and benevolent intentions, is smitten by a "breaking forth of God." Therefore David is afraid to receive it into his house. He does so only after becoming assured that God's will directs him to do it, and then accomplishes its entry with extreme ritualistic precaution (2 Sam. 6: 4-18; *cf.* 1 Sam. 6: 3 ff.). On the other hand, that is *unclean* which has been infected by coming into contact with death, sickness, decomposition, and pollution, or with strange gods and their service, and has thus, as it were, contracted infection through something repugnant to the deity. The laws concerning forbidden food, and also the injunctions against touching dead bodies and against participation in "superstitious" usages and enjoyments, are finally reducible to the above. Thus both, indeed, are fundamentally different: things in contact with God are holy, whereas those in contact with something contradictory to God are unclean. Yet neither deals with ethical considerations,⁴ but both refer to purely "physical" conditions. And both disqualify man for participation in the normal social life and subject him to the ban in case of oversight. Thus there is naturally a frequent transition between both. Whosoever enters into contact with something consecrated becomes holy. But at the same time he is unclean for daily life. Legalistic Judaism of the very latest period still says that "the canonical writings defile the hands," *i. e.*, entail washings before other things may be touched, while scriptures not holy do not have that effect. That which

⁴ It is not easy to decide under which head to classify the uncleanness of sexual companionship and of child-birth (Exod. 19: 15; 2 Sam. 21: 5; Lev., chap. 12). Totemistic conceptions may originally have been at the bottom of "flesh torn by beasts" or of "unclean beasts" unfit for "holy men" (Exod. 22: 28 ff.).

is holy and unclean demands acts of "consecration" and "purification" (*piacula*) before the person can resume his place in the congregation of worshipers.

In this circle of ideas early ages also included sin, as far as it was related to sacrifice. The world of the inner life was not yet recognized. Likewise that which in mutual intercourse is left to the individual good will. Only what the ordinances of custom and tradition concerning the worship of God and regard for his sacred possessions, and what the inviolability of life and property, secured by religious obligations and by unity of blood, demanded of the normal citizen, formed the sphere in which men "sin." Whosoever has committed such things intentionally and maliciously (*בְּיָד רָמָה*, *e. g.*, *Exod. 14:8*) is unfit to be a member of the sacred community. Such sin brings divine wrath upon the entire solidary kinship, for God guards his rights and the order sanctioned by him. Therefore the community must put such offenders under the ban. They may not, according to the juridical usage of various other nations, buy themselves off with a ransom. The members of the clan must with their own hands "cut off the offense from among them." Thus only can they preserve the favorable communion of their god. Whether one has profaned God's sanctuaries, *e. g.*, his "devoted things" (*Josh. 7:1 ff.; 6:21; 8:26; 10:1*); whether one has broken the oath (*2 Sam. 21:1-8; cf. Josh. 9:24*), or maliciously shed the blood of a kinsman (*Numb. 35:31*); whether one has shamelessly violated the sacred custom (*Lev. 20:9 ff.; 24:15 ff.*), or worshiped strange gods (*Deut. 7:26; Lev. 18:21, 25; 20:2*), always "that man shall be cut off from among his people" in order that the land be not defiled and the community be not subjected to the wrath of its God (*Lev. 17:3 ff., 27, 28; Numb. 35:31*). It is otherwise where no intentional offense obtains, but only a sin done unwittingly (*שִׁגְגָה*, *Lev. 4:2, 22; 5:15*). If the offender is unknown to the community (*Deut. 21:1-12*), or if the blood is not shed maliciously (*Deut. 19:10*), or the like, there still exists a defilement, similar to where holiness and uncleanness have infected a person. It cannot be allowed to remain. But it can be purged away by propitiation and purification.

As the former case does not deal with punishment of the sinner in our sense of the word, but with the ban, *i. e.*, the extermination from its midst of that which hinders the consecration and endangers the permanence of the community, so the latter case does not deal with forgiveness of sin in our sense, but with purification, in which the physical point of view entirely obscures the ethical. In the first case, by reason of the solidarity of the community, even the family can be exterminated with the offender (Josh. 7:24-26), or even fall under the ban for the guilty person, if he can no longer be found (2 Sam. 21:7); and *vice versa* the ban of an individual representing the community is regarded as the execution of the ban upon the entire guilty community (Numb. 16:22 ff.; 25:7). The second case deals with sacramental symbolical lustrations, for which there can be no logical explanation.

For purification "water" is commonly employed, which, according to self-evident symbolism, is the stain-purging element.⁵ Naturally elements serving for sacrifice, and thus conveying the union of the community with its god, are in a still higher sense qualified to "cleanse." Thus the ashes of the victim burned as a sin-offering for the community (Numb. 19:11 ff.). Thus the sacred ointment and the frankincense in the priest's hand (Numb. 17:11 ff.; 33:3). Thus, above all, the sacrificial blood in which the real sacrificial consecration rests. This blood reconsecrates the sanctuaries which have lost their sanctity through contact with profane things (Lev. 14:10 ff.; 16:4 ff.). This blood brought before God gives man the consecration necessary for immunity in God's holy presence (נִפְיָר).⁶ Into the reason for this Israel undoubtedly never inquired. As water cleanses articles and persons, who have become too holy or

⁵ See Exod. 19:14 (שִׁטָּה); 40:12, 31; Lev. 13:34, 54, 58; Numb. 19:7 ff.

⁶ The blood shed cries unto heaven (Gen. 4:10; Job 16:18); and there is a predilection to avoid the curse of this blood by killing without shedding it (Gen. 38:24; Lev. 20:14; 21:9; Josh. 7:15). Thus also beasts which have killed a man must die (Exod. 21:28 ff.). The "clan" demands revenge for "its" blood which has been shed, even in war (2 Sam. 3:27; 14:7; Judg. 8:18). Ezekiel (24:7, 8) still finds it particularly aggravating that the blood spilt upon the bare rock is not covered with dust and thus concealed.

unclean, from their dangerous "infection;" as, in singular cases, fire more effectively consummates this purification (Numb. 31:22 ff.; Lev. 13:52 ff.); so sacrificial blood cleanses, or sacrificial ashes mixed with water and sacred oil (Lev. 14:14; Numb. 19:11 ff.). In this sense, Israel, like all other nations, from time immemorial has known lustrations. And they have continued to the latest legislation. The old conceptions of purification and consecration, although in a changed form, are apparent, where, as we shall see later, the impurity of a leprous house or person is taken away by sacrificial blood and then symbolically carried out "into the open field" by the bird brought as a second victim (Lev. 14:4 ff., 44 f.); and on the great Day of Atonement (Lev., chap. 16), where the defilement arising from neglect of cult is washed from the holy things by sacrificial blood, so that, as a thing removed, it can, thereupon, be carried into the unclean wilderness unto Azazel by the second sacrificial he-goat (*cf.* Zech. 5:8 ff.). Ezekiel, still more primitively, thinks of a semi-annual consecration of the sanctuary defiled by the *unsanctification* of the worshipers (45:18-20).

Thus the old sacred usages of Israel reveal manifold traces of a connection with times in which the Hebrews, like their brethren, regarded the relation to their God as essentially physical, sin and natural impurity on the whole as synonymous, and blood, the life-vehicle, as the means of actually establishing a unity of life of men among themselves and between the community and their God. On the whole, however, the religion of the Old Testament, even prior to the prophetic period, has already reached a stage at which the conceptions of primitive times are no longer a matter of definite consciousness. The undisputed documents of this age plainly reveal worship of two cults. Religion essentially consists in sacrifice, which would render to the deity a gratifying reverence and gift. And sacrifice, according to its most significant phenomenon, is a *sacrificial meal* at which the worshipers rejoice around the table of their God.

At this period Israel also brought agricultural gifts (Mic. 6:7) to the sanctuaries of the national God. The first-fruits

came to the sanctuary, carried to the altar in a basket (Deut. 26:1 ff.), and through such consecration the harvest was regarded as "clean" and blessed for food (Hos. 9:3; *cf.* Exod. 23:14, 19; 34:26). The tithe of the produce belonged to the deity as lord and king of the land (Amos 7:1). Sheep-shearing had to render a tribute of wool (Hos. 2:5 ff.; Deut. 18:4; 1 Sam. 25:2 ff.). And to each sacrificial meal belonged an oblation of flour, oil, and wine (Judg. 9:13), which was assigned to the priest and therefore holy (Lev. 7:14), and given in addition to the bread which the participants themselves ate (Amos 4:5). There was also in the sanctuary the continually renewed holy bread (shewbread), preserved there as "a bread before God" (1 Sam. 21:5 ff.). Salt (Lev. 2:13) went with every flour-offering. To this day the Arabs use the expression for hospitable relations: "There is salt between us." The law reads: "A covenant of salt before the Lord unto thee." But the proper sacrifice is that of the animal, *i. e.*, the slaughter of a domestic animal serving for the feast (זֶבֶחַ). Unbloody sacrifice so little has an independent place beside it that the name designating it in the later Law (מִנְחָה) is in the earlier literature still used also for animal sacrifice (Gen. 4:3; Judg. 6:18; 1 Sam. 26:19; (2:17)). Milk, fruit, bread, and sometimes venison formed the daily meal. It became a feast by the slaughter of a domestic animal (Isa. 22:13; Gen. 18:7). Kine, sheep, and goats figured as victims for the Hebrews. Doves and, in cases of need, flour-offerings were perhaps later symbolical substitutes. The altar is the place of slaughter (מִזְבֵּחַ). And enough of the naïve view of antiquity undoubtedly survived in Israel to maintain the thought of God's actual partaking with enjoyment of the things offered. To be sure, the mere presentation of the sacrifice to God, which has remained the prevailing mode of sacrifice among the Arabs, is presupposed only in ancient narratives, in which God himself in a flame from heaven accepts the offered gift. Thus presumably at Abel's sacrifice (Gen., chap. 4), and at the sacrifices of Gideon and Manoah (Judg., chaps. 6 and 13). So it is with the shewbread. In ordinary cases the burning of the portions assigned to God is very early

customary, because the more spiritual conception of a "celestial" God permitted only a spiritualized partaking. Yet as fire-food of God (אֵשֶׁה), as his bread (לֶחֶם), as a sweet savor (רִיחַ; נִיחֹחַ), sacrifice everywhere appears, even in the Law, in which the conception of God has long since become supersensuous (*ℓ. g.*, Lev. 1:9, 13, 17; 2:2-11; 3:5).

Sacrificial meals appear partly as voluntary feasts, mostly called forth by vows (2 Sam. 15:7 ff.), which were usually paid on feast days, as, for instance, the annual sacrifice of Elkanah (1 Sam., chap. 1); partly as feasts of aristocratic families at their ancestral seats, as seen in the case of David, Absalom, and Adoniah (1 Sam. 20:6, זָבַח הַיָּמִים; 2 Sam. 13:23; 1 Kings 1:9); partly as public festivities, at which the most esteemed men occupied the place of honor, like Samuel in Ramah (1 Sam. 9:12 ff.; *cf.* 16:2 ff.), or which were ostentatiously prepared by kings (1 Kings 8:5; 2 Kings 16:15). These meals, however, as is evident from the castigatory words of the prophets, were often taken from the tithes and gifts of the common people (Gen. 28:22) and abused as welcome occasions for riotous banquets by the rulers (Amos 2:7; 5:11; 6:4). According to the custom of all festive meals, the whole community—including the poor and the strangers—had a natural right to participate at such meals (Gen. 31:35; *cf.* 1 Sam. 9:13; 2 Sam. 6:19; 1 Kings 19:21). They "rejoiced before God." And in many instances we must think of noisy jubilees, with music and song, aye, orgiastic excess of enjoyment. Not only Amos (5:6) and Isaiah (28:8) describe such banquets. In Hannah's case the priest presumes not grief but drunkenness after the sacrificial meal (1 Sam. 1:13). And the harlot in Prov. 7:14 invites the simple youth to a feast on payment of vows.

At these meals the blood and fat, being holy (Lev. 3:17), are directly offered to God. His former due seems to have fallen to the priests or ministrants. At least the sons of Eli are gravely rebuked for taking arbitrarily, and in violation of reverence to God, more than their customary portion of the flesh (1 Sam. 2:12 ff.). Yet the early customs were very different from later traditions. The flesh is boiled, not roasted, and the

priest first gets his due from the boiled flesh (1 Sam. 2:13 f.). Thus in Judg. 6:18 ff. the boiling of sacrificial flesh appears to be the rule. According to the narrative, 1 Sam. 9:19 f.; 16:2 f., Samuel, as honorary presider at the sacrifice, had to claim the honorary portion. The actual meal was eaten by the guests at the holy place, probably in specially prepared apartments (לְשֹׁכָה, 1 Sam. 9:19). Propitiation or penitency was in no way connected with these meals. They were intended to honor and gratify the deity. The guests were conscious of being participants at God's table, and thus reunited with him and protected. The common meal unites (1 Kings 13:22). "If God were pleased to kill us, he would not have received such hospitality at our hands," is the conclusion of Manoah's wife, wholly in the spirit of ancient piety (Judg. 13:23). Not repentance and forgiveness of sin, but purity and abolition of every defiling thing were the prerequisites of blessed participation at these meals. Thus abstinence from sexual intercourse is a prime condition for the eating of shewbread (1 Sam. 21:5 f.). Thus certainly all contact with dead bodies or unclean things was an impediment to the enjoyment of the sacrifice. Ablutions and lustrations always must have preceded such acts to avoid the provocation of divine wrath and the danger of the ban (*e. g.*, Gen. 35:2; Exod. 19:10, 14; 22:28; 29:4 f., and often). But in other respects a spirit of joyfulness prevailed at the sacrificial meal. The people could think of no greater sorrow than a cessation of such feasts (Hos. 3:4; 2:13). The significance of these sacrifices was thus no other than a desire (1) to offer God the honor and gratification which such offerings, according to the universal presumption, effected—whether gratitude or petition was to be expressed, or vows made in time of need were to be paid; and (2) by table-fellowship with God, united with him through the sacred life-blood of the animal, to enjoy and strengthen the assurance of his favor.⁷

Besides these sacrificial meals, although scarcely so prevalent as the Priestly Law presupposes, burnt-offerings (עֹלָה) are

⁷ The narratives, Judg., chaps. 6 and 13, still show in the simplest and naïvest form the intention of *honoring God by entertaining him*, and thus entering into a hospitable relation with him.

ever found in early Israel. The entire victim, allowing no portion for the offerers, is rendered to God in fire. We are unable to decide whether this originally grew out of the mere portion of God at the great sacrificial feasts.⁸ It seems improbable. For along with the conviction that God was pleased to receive such "food," the rendering of the *entire* animal, as a special token of reverence, lay in the nature of religious thought.⁹ If the honoring and gratifying of the deity is the evidently prime object of every sacrifice, and the gaining of a secure and steadfast communion with God the final end, then this form of sacrifice seems particularly adapted to gratify God, to make him propitious concerning the wishes of the community, and eventually to regain his forfeited favor.¹⁰

Burnt-offering in early Israel subserved all these purposes. There was no special sin-offering. For neglect of cult or for pardonable disregard of sacred usages a "fine" was paid to the sanctuary (Hos. 4:8; 2 Kings 12:16);¹¹ so that self-interested priests rejoiced in the "sins" of the people (Hos. 4:8; Amos 2:8). Yet the people were convinced that the actual wrath of God could be appeased if he would but "smell an offering" (1 Sam. 26:19; 3:14; 13:10); just as among men the gift rendered "smooth the face of the offended" (*e. g.*, Ps. 45:12; *cf.* Gen. 32:21; 2 Kings 13:4). Burnt-offerings were rendered when Israel went to war in order to "sanctify" the host and consecrate it for the work of God (1 Sam. 7:9; 13:10; *cf.* Isa. 13:3). Burnt-offerings were vowed when seeking God's aid in dangerous enterprises (Judg. 11:30). Burnt-offerings were rendered when on festal occasions God was to be specially celebrated and honored (1 Kings 8:5; 2 Sam. 6:13 ff.). But,

⁸ Among the classical nations holocausts are rendered only for the inhabitants of the lower regions, with whom the living seek no communion.

⁹ The "first" sacrifice, Gen., chap. 4, is a burnt-offering. Likewise Noah's sacrifice, Gen., chap. 9. Likewise the ancient sacrifices are "whole burnt-offerings" (Judg. 7:13; 1 Sam. 7:9, *עֹלֹת*). Sacrifices and burnt-offerings appear side by side in Exod. 10:25.

¹⁰ Especially significant is Ps. 20:4: "God, remember all thy offerings and accept as fat thy burnt-sacrifices." ("Serve," 2 Sam. 15:8.)

¹¹ *Cf.* the *עֹלֹת* of the Philistines, 1 Sam. 6:3.

as far as we know, burnt-offerings as a fixed part of the daily cult prior to the Law are attested only in 2 Kings 16:15, a passage which is not early.

Naturally, in burnt-offering also the blood rendered to the deity is the actual means of consecration (in case of sin the propitiation, *res sacramenti*). Yet surely no longer on account of a clear idea of the union of the life of God with that of his community through this life of the animal. The essential part is lacking: the eating of the animal by the offerers. Still less in the sense of inflicting a punishment upon the animal. For in most cases it is not a question of forgiveness of sin at all. The carnal mind of the people now saw the real efficacy of these sacrifices only in the honoring and gratifying gift. And in seeking forgiveness they hoped to effect a greater impression by the greatness and splendor, eventually by the unprecedented character, of these gifts (Mic. 6:7, hecatombs, rivers of oil, firstborn). The blood as the life of the animal was regarded as attesting its appropriation to God. Its mysterious, consecrative, God-gratifying, and God-appeasing effect had long since transcended all theoretical doubt. And obviously in burnt-offering, as in every sacred rite, all kinds of means were sought which seemed appropriate against the danger of evoking divine wrath by unsanctioned contact with "holy things." Thus we read of taking off the sandals, that the dust of unclean soil might not come to the sanctuary (Exod. 3:5; Josh. 5:15), and of washing and changing the garments (Gen. 35:2; Exod. 19:10).¹² Not ethical thoughts of atonement, but sensual ideas of consecration and purification lay at the bottom of such usages.

Burnt-offering, even when intended to conciliate the angry God, only attempted to render him desirable homage by offering up the best, and thus by the gift to make effective the sinner's desire for pardon. By increasing that which would delight and honor the favorable deity it was hoped to make the unfavorable God a favorable one. That is seen especially in human sacrifice, which everywhere among the nations related to Israel constitutes the summit of the mystery of piacular sacrifice. It

¹² Sacred garments, Gen. 27:15, 27; 35:2; Exod. 19:14; 2 Kings 10:22.

is not a matter of punishment and suffering of the victim. For the cry of the victim was drowned by the clamor of musical joy. The intention was rather to offer as the greatest gift to the deity the best, the firstling blood of the tribe (Exod. 13 : 13 ; 34 : 20 ; Gen. 49 : 3 ; Ezek. 20 : 25). The hardest and greatest gift appeared the most efficacious sacrifice. In Carthage, for instance, it was considered an imposition on the deity to offer purchased slave children in place of the children of noble family. In Israel such sacrifices were never regarded as an exponent of true national piety. But their powerful effect upon the deity was not questioned. Second Kings 3 : 27 unhesitatingly assumes that a divine wrath against the enemy was the result of the sacrifice of his own son by the Moabite king. And in times of distress this dreadful custom ever reappeared in Israel (2 Kings 16 : 3 ; 17 : 17 ; 21 : 6 ; 23 : 10 ; Jer. 7 : 31 ; Ezek. 16 : 20, 21 ; 23 : 36 f.). Aye, at times it was regarded a religious ordinance in Israel, although one "not good" (Mic. 6 : 6, 7 ; Jer. 7 : 30 f. ; 19 : 5 ; Isa. 57 : 5 ; Ezek. 20 : 25). The story in Gen., chap. 22, could only have been told on the supposition that the notion of God desiring a human life for a burnt-offering had no sacrilegious aspect. At the same time, this narrative shows how completely foreign in connection therewith the thought of punishment of the victim was. Abraham appears in full possession of divine favor. God simply demands of him the greatest gift which he is able to offer. Nor is it otherwise when Jephtha's daughter perishes as a holocaust, her father so having vowed in order to purchase God's aid for the great struggle (Judg. chap. 11). The "own son" in Micah (6 : 6 f.) is the climax of religious performances besides hecatombs of animal victims and rivers of oil, and thus is regarded only as the supreme gift. It was certainly not presumed among the people in these times that such a gift was actually appropriated as food by the deity. Yet it is characteristic that still in Ezekiel (16 : 20 ; 23 : 37, "for food") such images and conceptions recur, though they are naturally repudiated.

I deem it highly improbable that the custom ever obtained in Israel of offering animals otherwise regarded "unclean" on

account of their symbolical relation to the deity (rooted in primitive totemism). What mention there is of this kind (sacrifices of dogs, swine, mice, horses, fish) occurs only in very late books (Isa. 65:4; 66:3, 17; Ezek. 8:10; 2 Kings 23:11), and as foreign idolatry which, no more than the baking of cakes for the queen of heaven (Jer. 44:15 ff.) can be attributed to the religion of Israel.¹³ He who thinks differently in the matter can see in such sacrifices only the rendering of a gift precious to the deity on account of special physical relations.

Thus sacrifice in early Israel was the actual life of religion. The people candidly expected that the gift ascending to God in fire would be a pleasing and appropriate one, fit to insure his favor where they were conscious of possessing it, and to regain the same when he was wroth. In the latter event burnt-offering was, indeed, a serious celebration surrounded by "dreadful mystery," for which the people prepared and consecrated themselves by fasting and praying, with lustrations and with tears, ready to yield to God anything he might desire, even the most precious, the blood of their own child. But it was neither a matter of vicarious punishment nor of expiatory suffering. The virtue of sacrificial blood uniting with God was no longer felt in the direct and sensual manner of primitive humanity. Still it figured as the indisputable background of all sacrificial acts. The blood passed to God as a vehicle of life, in which the life was accepted and appropriated by him, and not as a symbol of death. And the offered gift itself was the expression of the desire to seek forgiveness, the confession of personal guilt and of divine justice, the active petition for pardon, by means of which it was thought to "smooth the face of God," as in human relations the face of the king.

But where the community felt no wrath of the deity impending—and this was during the greater part of early Israelitish history—neither propitiation nor forgiveness was required; the people approached their God without trembling or evil conscience. Drawing near to the sanctuary from the dust of

¹³ In Egypt, Babylon, and Syria such sacrifices of totem animals were very popular, and imagined to have a powerful effect.

daily life, they needed consecration, sacramental purification (1 Sam. 20: 5-26; 21: 5), "sanctification." With sacred awe they approached the sacred shrine, which kills every profane thing coming into touch with it. But they drew near with glad spirits. And when the holocausts, which they had vowed or consecrated in joyful gratitude, ascended to God, they gathered at the sacrificial meal prepared out of the oblations brought along (1 Sam. 1: 4, 24; 10: 3) or the treasures of the sanctuary, and all the participants in the consecrated hall (1 Sam. 9: 12 ff.) had occasion to "rejoice before God." Blood and fat had long since been deemed too "holy" to be eaten by the offerers. The fat ascended from the altar to God. The blood was brought to the sanctuary. The offerers ate and drank "before God" as his guests and table-companions. His honorary share went to the ministrant of the sacrifice. They felt connected and united with God in hospitable communion, the common meal being the seal of hospitality. And at the height of popular life, at the anniversaries (1 Sam. 1: 13), at sheep-shearings (Hos. 2: 5, 9; Deut. 18: 4; Gen. 38: 13; 1 Sam. 25: 3; 2 Sam. 13: 23), and harvest festivals, the merry-making grew boisterous and oftentimes very "unholy" (Amos 5: 11; Isa. 28: 7 f.). There was occasion to render such sacrifices in every city, in every tribe. Originally a simple stone upon which the blood was poured evidently sufficed for the sacrifice (Judg. 6: 20; 13: 19; 1 Sam. 13: 9 f.; 14: 33). Besides the "anointed" stone, which guaranteed the presence of the deity (Gen. 28: 18), there appears the simple altar (Exod. 20: 24). And everywhere in the land where sacred tradition pointed to appearances of God, in Hebron and in Bethel, in Gilgal and in Shiloh, in Ramah and in Gibeah—briefly, in the entire Israelitish territory—were places which by reason of nature or of history were regarded holy, and therefore particularly fit for sanctuaries. Noble families had their family sanctuaries—in Ophra and Bethlehem, in Hebron and Schechem. Yet they no longer sought there a "god of the clan," but the God of Israel. Yahweh's entire possession, the sacred soil, was dotted with sanctuaries where this daily cult could be practiced. The feasts, moreover, gathered greater multitudes to the place where God

was present in a symbol, as in the holy ark at Shiloh or Jerusalem, or the sacred stone of Bethel (Gen, chap. 28). Sacrifice is always a social matter. The kin or local community participate therein (1 Sam. 9:12; 20:6, 29; 2 Sam. 15:7, 12). The individual as a rule arranges his sacrifice to coincide with the sacrifice of the community (1 Sam. 1:3, 21; 9:12). Originally every sacrifice was a feast, and every feast a sacrifice. And while in ancient naturalism the "physical" unity of the god with his "clan" was fundamental to the entire sacrificial rite, in Israel long since the historically founded communion of God with his people composed the background of the cult.

In these sacrificial usages, therefore, the elementary sensuous thought of primitive times is already obscured and forgotten. The offering ascending in fire is an etherealized food. Worship and gifts of reverence have become the center of the celebration, instead of physical union with the deity. And the historic Redeemer, united with his people and throning in heaven, has taken the place of the tribal gods present with their kindred in a physical manner. But the sacrificial cult still had a "pagan" character. By "presents," by "pleasing incense," the people thought to gratify, to purchase, to appease God, who desired to partake of sacrifice and have his honor acknowledged by renderings of unusual character. Thereby they thought to fulfil their duty toward him, and with quiet conscience confided in his help.¹⁴ Thereon they relied when they thought themselves befallen by an exceptional wrath of God. Void of a moral sacrificial temper, aye, frequently in very unholy, excessive, and selfish participation of the sacrificial feast, they rested satisfied and justified before God.

Thus things stood in Israel when the prophets appeared, from whom emanated a new development of the old religion. In sacrifice, and all connected therewith, the religious experience of the people centered. In the main religion was regarded as an affair of good fortune, adding to the entire life of the people an element of splendor and exaltation. In festive communion

¹⁴ 2 Sam. 12:16 ff. is significant. David attempts to save the life of his child by fasting and mourning. That proving fruitless, he "eats and drinks."

with God they felt confident of union with him through hospitality, and assured of his aid. Then without penitent mood, devoid of moral exaltation, they met in pure holiday joy, which was capable also of running into sensuous excess (Judg. 9:27; Isa. 22:11-13). Where it was intended to do God a special honor, either on account of vows or in gratitude and worship, the sacrifice became a gift of the entire offering to God. Then the Israelites spared not the most precious offerings; aye, they were ready for the most formidable sacrifices. And that was manifestly so when in their fate they surmised a wrath of their God. But even then it was in no way a question of moral consciousness of sin. The judgment of God upon existing guilt was read in famine or pestilence or misfortune of war. Then they approached the sanctuary not only, as usual, with consecrations befitting any profane person coming in contact with the sacred, but they came with sorrow and weeping, with fasting and rending of garments (1 Sam. 7:9; Isa. 37:1; Joel 2:12). And they came with sacrifices; yet not with distinct sin-offerings. All sacrifices, because pleasing to God, were accounted expiatory. The bond of communion was also the means of renewal of the union. Burnt-offering was the actual expiatory sacrifice (1 Sam. 3:14; 26:19; 2 Sam. 24:18-25; Mic. 6:6, 7; Job 1:5; 42:8). And candidly the people expected to regain the forfeited favor of God by such renderings; if grand and splendid enough, presents would "smooth the face of God."

As the national fortunes of Israel began to turn more tragic and less successful, the endeavor and impulse to seek propitiation of God were naturally enhanced (Mic. 6:6f.; Hos. 10:9f.; Jer. 3:25; Ezra 9:7; Ps. 106:6). The former happy assurance gave place to an anxious concern for the favor of the deity; and obviously there was an enlargement of the "pagan" view of sacrifice among the people. They hoped to be able to purchase and force the aid of the angry God. After Ahaz, human sacrifice, as the most potent means of appeasing the wrath of God, with increasing irresistibility penetrated into Israel.¹⁵

¹⁵ Cf. the vivid presentation of Isa. 30:33 (57:5).

Not moral penitency, but sacramental offering, seemed the means of succor for the people.

Against this "pagan" feature of piety the preaching of the prophets after Amos directed itself with an entirely new clearness and determination. While, indeed, they regard themselves as opposing a profane and fundamentally blasphemous idea irreconcilable with Israel's religion, yet, in fact, they antagonize the entire primitive notion of man concerning his communion with God, which the religion of Israel had only outgrown. God's union with his people rests on moral righteousness. "This is the supreme end before which, in decisive cases, even the nation and its fortunes must give way. God's grace is in store for those who penitently return to the divine will and with all their heart subject themselves to it. All other performances are incompetent to awaken God's pleasure and to regain his lost favor." With this conception the religion of primitive mankind is, in the main, eradicated, and that religion brought into being of which the "worship of God in spirit and truth" and "reasonable service" form the center.

It is difficult to say how far the religious ideals of these men logically broke away from the sacrificial cult. They speak very often of the intercourse of a divinely favored and righteous nation with its God. And we may assume that, like their contemporaries, they thought this intercourse mediated by sacrificial communion and consecration of gifts rendered in true piety—somewhat according to Ps. 51, which rejects sacrificial performances as undesired by God, and yet in its appended (?) conclusion (vs. 21) points to a sacrificial service of the future acceptable to God. Thus to men like Isaiah the temple at Jerusalem, of which the sacrificial cult was a necessary part, is a self-evident feature of their faith and hope.¹⁶

The prophets, however, speak of God who is angry with his people on account of their "unrighteousness," and who with fixed determination announces their doom. It is a question as

¹⁶ A prophet like Hosea, speaking so earnestly of the uncleanness of the pagan country and of the bread of mourners (9:3, 4), has hardly freed himself from the antique ideas of cult, as little as Amos, who (4:5) significantly reproves "sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which is leavened."

to the means of averting this judgment. And as to that, the prophets, with perfect logic, wholly and in every form reject sacrifice. Whosoever attempts with gifts to bribe the God of the universe and purchase his favor is not only a fool, forgetting that the whole world belongs to this God, and that he needs nor desires aught; he offends and deforms the God of justice, who represents the moral idea of the world, as if he were a potentate greedy of honor and enjoyments, and devoid of moral earnestness and righteousness. There is but one way to God's forgiving grace: the moral way, a sure way alone for upright and just hearts. To rend the hearts and not the garments, to be convinced of and confess personal guilt (Pss. 32 and 51), to seek judgment, to relieve the oppressed and distressed, to abolish violence and treachery from national life—thus penitentially to leave the wrong way and energetically search God's way—that is the new sacrifice which will bring propitiation; "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1: 11 ff.). Thus the antique doctrine of atonement is eradicated. And thus it is certain that the Christian doctrine of atonement cannot draw its actual content from the sacrificial theory, even though the figurative language of Christian piety, since the epistle to the Hebrews, is fond of reclining on ancient sacrificial imagery.

The language of the prophets permits no shadow of a doubt concerning that. God speaks through Amos (5: 21 ff.): "I hate, I despise your feasts. . . . Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and oblations, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the thank-offerings of your fat beasts. Instead of songs and harps bring judgment and righteousness. Did ye bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness?" In Hosea we read: "I desire kindness and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings" (6: 6). Micah (6: 7), in face of the readiness of the people for anything, even the greatest sacrifices, says: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth God require of thee but to do justly and to love kindness and to walk humbly with thy God?" Isaiah (1: 11 ff.) speaks: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith God. I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the

fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats;" and he calls the popular cult "a trampling of the courts of God," "vain oblations," "incense of abomination." And in Jeremiah (6:20; 7:21) God asks his people: "To what purpose cometh there to me frankincense from Sheba, and the precious cinnamon cane from a far country? Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me." He derisively instructs the people, "Add your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices and eat ye flesh," and emphatically declares: "I spake not unto your fathers nor commanded them in the day that brought them out of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices; but concerning justice." Likewise he rejects external trust in "Yahweh's temple" (7:4). The post-exilic Zechariah (7:4) is still certain that God did not punish his people on account of performances of cult, but on account of justice and mercy. And Joel, who otherwise is impressed by a quite contrary aspect (1:14, 16), yet exhorts: "Rend your heart and not your garments" (2:12 ff.).

The idealism of the prophets did not achieve its design. When the old national sanctuary, which after Deuteronomy had become the only legitimate place of cult, sank into ashes, and the people for two generations without temple or sacrifice abode in an "unclean country" (Hos. 2:13; 3:4), the temple and cult became an ideal living in the noblest minds and demanding reconstruction. And the more the priestly factors decided and directed that which survived of Israel, the more the sacrificial cult again predominated in pious thought. It suffices to call attention to Ezekiel in distinction from the earlier prophets in order to establish this impression. While the "unclean" is utterly repugnant to his soul (4:13 f.) and the pagan country with its food seems defiled to him, his ideal is a country whose center is the temple, a national life whose supreme content is the sacrificial cult (chaps. 40-48). The "priestly Torah" of Exodus and Leviticus places the regulation of the sanctuary and the technique of sacrifice, which in early Israel had been the affair of rulers and priesthood, into the center of sacred history and makes them the main element of the divinely ordained religion, from its very

beginning (Exod., chaps. 25 ff.; 36 ff.; Lev., chaps. 1-10; 16). In Joel the interruption of sacrifice appears as the greatest national misfortune (1:13; 2:14); in Daniel it is the most formidable persecution which Israel has to endure (8:13; 9:27). In the restored Jerusalem there flourished a sacrificial cult of a nicer and more systematic perfection, and more highly popular, than that in Bethel or in the Solomonic temple. Half a millennium had to elapse, and a higher revelation be given to humanity, before the rise of the religion which knows only the great moral sacrifice of the life of the servant of God and the daily offerings in spirit and truth.

And yet one would only view the surface and not comprehend the real content of the post-exilic religion of Israel by failing to recognize that the prophetic thought has in substance been victorious. Sacrifice after the exile is no longer the real center of the people's religious life. Piety centers around "the law of God." The synagogue is more significant for the majority of the nation than the temple. The scribe is more popular and active than the priest. The temple, with its sacred, minutely arranged, and artistically decorated sacrificial service, is, indeed, the pride of the nation, the mysterious place where God's favorable communion with Israel presents itself and is guaranteed. But for most Israelites in ordinary times it had only the effect of a sacred symbol, accepted by faith and living in the heart. The daily communion of the individual with God is now no more connected with sacrifices. That explains the comparative ease with which the favorable communion of God with his people secured by sacrificial cult was transposed into the faith in divine grace guaranteed by the sacrifice of Christ. For the majority of the pious that was merely the transformation of a lower form of faith into a higher one, not the transition from a sacrificial to a spiritual religion.

In the main this development was decided with the introduction of the deuteronomic law under Josiah. With the achievement of a central sanctuary for the whole nation the antique "sacrificial religion" was made impossible. Sacrifice at this place could only be made *for* the people, no longer itself be the

expression of the people's religious life. It was now impossible that every festive flesh-meal should be a sacrificial act. The blood of the domestic animal could no longer regularly be assigned to God. Being "holy," it could be withheld from profane use, the law directing to "pour it out" (Lev. 3:17; 17:10). But in other respects the sacrificial thought ceased to rule the entire festal life of the people (Deut. 12:15 f.). The sacrificial meal became the exception. It concentrated itself chiefly upon the feasts. And thereby naturally "burnt-offering" enters into the foreground as the fixed gift of honor to God. In daily life prayer and instruction in Scripture were more important than sacrifice. While Judah—which was really nothing but a large city with a small territory of land—still existed as a kingdom, these things were not felt to any marked degree. Deuteronomy presupposes an active participation of the people in the cult.¹⁷ But for a people growing up into millions in different countries it was inevitable.

After the great prophetic men, whose preaching lived on among the people as "God's word," the naïve antique notions of sacrifice were impossible in Israel's religion. Not only the thought of a common life of God and his community, nourished by the common blood, was obsolete, but also the view that God desires sacrifice for food and pleasure or for the gratification of his craving of honor. Old expressions, like "bread of God," "sweet savor," and "fire-food," survived; yet they could only be taken in a spiritualized sense, and never without the obvious intermediary thought that the attitude of the offering congregation was essentially valuable to God. And especially in cases of appeasing God's wrath and effecting his pardon, every sacrificial theory not founded on repentance and earnest decision of a new life was excluded (Pss. 40:4; 50:7 ff.).

Israel for a long time lived without cult and sanctuary in an unconsecrated country. And yet they were confident of the grace of their God, for divine wrath had changed into a

¹⁷ It sanctions the change of tithes and firstlings into money with which to equip the joyous sacrificial feasts at the sanctuary (14:22 f.; cf. 12:12 f.; 14:23; 16:11; 26:11; 27:12). But the tithe must still in every third year be dedicated to benevolent purposes (14:28; 26:12).

Redeemer's love. They, therefore, could no longer regard atonement as bound to sacrifice. The sacrifice of "God's servant" (Isa., chap. 53) has nothing to do with the sacrificial cult. It is a heroic act of faith and of love stronger than death and national guilt. Thus the doctrine of the atonement of the congregation of the second temple is as little to be found in the "sacrificial Torah" of the Law as is the Christian doctrine. Religion has ceased to be "sacrifice." It has been transformed into righteousness and obedience toward divine commandments on the one hand, and faith and repentance on the other. The sacrificial cult of the temple is, in fact, a thing standing behind the daily religion of the individual like a symbol of securely guaranteed communion between the sin-forgiving God and the believing congregation. He alone who unreservedly acknowledges these fundamental conditions can understand the intention of the sacrifices in the Law of Israel and their actual importance for the nation.

The sacrificial laws in the priestly Torah undoubtedly contain very early material. The sacrificial regulations for the priests of the old Jerusalem may lie at the bottom everywhere. Without the assumption of such a given basis the presence of the conception of guilt-offering (אֲשָׁם) alongside of that of sin-offering (חַטָּאת), in Lev., chap. 14, for instance, is wholly inexplicable. A lawgiver systematically creating anew would have defined the boundaries there in a totally different way. And the collective material of the laws corresponds with traditional regulations. True, instead of the fine payable to the sanctuary, here generally a special sin-offering, or guilt-offering, is entailed. But, as Ezekiel's book shows, that was already customary in the later Jerusalem. For Ezekiel does not institute it as an ideal for the future, but speaks of it as self-evident (40:39; 43:19, 22; 44:26, 29; 45:17, 22; 46:20). And also the Day of Atonement with its peculiar sacrifice (Lev., chap. 16) is nowhere else alluded to. Yet Ezekiel institutes two days in the year for the "consecration of the sanctuary" (45:18, 20), and the Day of Atonement is essentially but a "consecration of the altar" for the purpose of again making the cult of the

people pleasing to God. The new feature in the priestly Torah, on the one hand, is the reception of the technique of sacrifice—which otherwise alone concerned the priesthood and might vary in different sanctuaries—as a constituent part of the national religion; on the other hand, the tendency of the law toward a systematic and artistic unification and perfection of the whole, which in the guilt-offering alone does not stand out entirely clear. The whole makes the impression of a revival in archaic style of early rites which have lost their natural connection with the daily life of the people. They are now no longer sacred usages whose meaning was plain to the pious people without further reflection, but positive divine enactments, about the basis and significance of which no pious person is any longer justified to think for himself.

It is entirely outside of the scope of these laws to unfold the ultimate ground of the effect of sacrifice. They would only secure the fixed order of the cult, not theologically explain its significance. That the life of the animal rendered to God in the sacrificial blood is the most sacred mystery of sacrifice was for those days a self-evident conviction resting on primitive presuppositions, and neither requiring nor admitting a theological explanation. It appears as an ordinance established with the beginnings of the human race that blood, as the “soul” of the animal, is too sacred for any profane participation, and is assigned to man only for the purpose of religious consecration (נֶפֶשׁ, Gen. 9:4; Deut. 12:16; Lev. 17:11). In a like manner the law presupposes that fat—the “blossom” of the flesh—belongs solely to God and must be rendered to him as sacrificial odor (Lev. 3:3, 17; 4:9 f.; 7:22 ff.; 26).¹⁸

The religion of Israel after the great prophets could surely no longer conceive of an actual partaking of the sacrifice by God. It is, indeed, very striking how near Ezekiel's phraseology approaches the naïve sensual feeling of primitive times. To

¹⁸ Thus, also, the best of fruits is termed “their fat,” Numb. 18:12 (the fat of the land). In case of the sons of Eli, disregard of the sanctity of fat seems their real offense against the cult, 1 Sam. 2:13 ff. (Lev. 17:6). The blood of game must be poured out and “covered with dust” (Lev. 17:13), that it cry not for revenge (Lev. 19:26).

him the altar is "a table of God" (40:39, 42; 44:15, שֻׁלְחָן) and the sacrifice "his bread" (44:7, 15, חֶלֶב יָדָם). And without prepossession he at least hypothetically speaks of the "eating" of the gods (16:20; 23:37). The priestly Torah, as already mentioned, is permeated by expressions like "fire bread," "bread of God," "sweet savor" (Lev. 1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9, 12; 3:5, 11, 16; 4:31; 6:8; 8:28; 17:6; 21:6, 17, 22; Exod. 29:18, 25, 41; Numb. 28:2-8). But we shall have to assume that this phraseology in those times was but a figurative garb of a more spiritual conception of the appropriation of sacrifice by God. Yet the impression remains all the more that the background of the sacrificial idea is the conviction that the gift of piety really produces a gratifying, propitious, and, in the end, conciliating effect on God. All sacrifices are rendered to God in fire, and thus etherealized. The Passah and the shewbread have lost their real sacrificial character. The community does not approach God empty-handed (Exod. 23:15) and pays its tithes. But these serve as emolument for the priests and no longer are employed for the expenses of the cult.

Unbloody sacrifice in single cases may serve as a symbolical substitute for slaughter-sacrifice (Lev. 2:1; 5:11; Numb. 5:15, 25, meal-offering, מִנְחָה). Otherwise it is an addition to slaughter-sacrifice—the actual sacrifice of cult—in connection with the libation of wine and the offering of frankincense. All "meal-offerings" fall under the head of incense (דִּקְטִיר). If the congregation or the priest brings them, they are, in fact, entirely burned (Lev. 6:14 f.). Otherwise only a symbolical fragrance-portion (אֶזְרָה, Isa. 66:3) is burned with the frankincense, and the rest belongs to the priest as his "most holy" due (Lev. 2:3, 9 f.; 6:9, 12 f.). They are as little employed for the sacrificial meal as is the sin-offering. These unbloody offerings consist of wheat flour, in various forms, with salt (Lev. 2:13), oil, and frankincense. Only in case of a penitential offering oil and frankincense are missing, since the acceptable sacrificial communion with God must first be made possible. Ingredients that bring about dissolution, like honey and leaven, are excluded as vehicles of dismal powers, although as substances

of nature they are good and pure, and may be used at religious meals (Lev., chap. 2) and offered as first-fruits.

The bloody sacrifice appears as sacrifice (זֶבֶחַ) in the proper sense. Blood as ever is the sacrificial mystery. And domestic animals alone, which from primeval times were regarded clean in Israel, and connected with man through communion of life—kine, sheep, and goats—are fit for sacrifice. Clean animals roaming through the wilds and becoming the hunters' prey lack that relation to man which at this period naturally was conceived of only under the aspect of property and household (Isa. 1:2 f.). Doves and turtle doves are allowable victims, though rather in the manner of a substitutionary gift (Lev. 5:7; 14; Numb., chap. 6). They probably appeared domestic in a wider sense. These articles and animals constitute the material for the sacrifices of the Law. Along with other dedications to the deity, they are in a general way termed קָרְבָּן (Lev. 1:2; 2:11; 3:1, 6; 5:11; 7:29; 17:4; Numb. 7:3, 12, 19), *i. e.*, a bringing of present to God. The expression תְּרוּמָה likewise comprises both sacrifice and dedicatory gift (*e. g.*, Numb. 18:8; *cf.* Numb. 7:3 ff.).

The sacrificial cult of the Law, like the old sacrificial usages of Israel, embraces the entire circle of the community's relation to its God. Gratitude and petition, vows and adoration, penitence and prayer for forgiveness, are expressed in sacrifice, although no longer with the primitive confidence which saw in sacrifice an effective means for every sin and every wish. Whatever the particular object of a sacrifice, always, and chiefly when sacrificial blood forms the center of the act, we find that the officiating priest, with blood and occasionally with the entire sacrificial rite, is to atone or "cover up" (כָּפַר) the offerer. We must next of all study the meaning of this expression. It can hardly signify an actual purging away of sin. For in thank-offering and burnt-offering the "covering" occurs in just the same way as in expiatory sacrifice. And the blood can hardly be considered here as "penally" shed. For here and there also other parts of the sacrificial rite "cover;" *e. g.*, the eating of the sacrificial flesh by the priest (Lev. 10:16 ff.), or the oil (Lev.

14:18, 29), or the frankincense (Numb. 8:19; 17:11). In the sacrificial process itself (Lev. 5:11; Numb. 5:15) must be found the atoning or covering power. Blood, only as it is the sacramental focus of the sacrificial mystery, is the real vehicle of this power.

The term "cover" in religious use has ordinarily a very simple meaning. Guilt or uncleanness is conceived as a taint, the sight of which calls forth the deity's wrath. If God "covers" this sin, he no longer wants to see it; that is, he forgives it. In this turn the phrase is synonymous with many other expressions for God's free and forgiving grace. We elsewhere read: "God lets sin pass over," "he casts it behind his back," "he lifts it away" (נָשָׂא), "he no longer remembers it," "he lets it vanish" (הִסִּיר), "heals it," "washes it away," "pardons it" (סָלַח). Directly synonymous is the term "to conceal" (כָּסָה, Neh. 3:37). These words do not deal with conditions of justice or cult. God exercises his sovereign right in pardoning. The object of "covering" is primarily sin (לֵּי or עַל, or the accusative).¹⁹ Or it is the land and the people defiled by sin that are released of their impurity (Deut. 32:43; Isa. 27:9), or accept the promise that a blood-guiltiness—in which they actually had no part—shall not be imputed to them (Deut. 21:1-9). When man appears as the one who "covers," the thought is that by a compensation, a כֹּפֶר, he moves the injured party to waive his right of revenge (2 Sam. 21:3; Numb. 35:31 ff.). כֹּפֶר in that case simply is the wergild inducing the injured party or the judge to consider the guilt no longer in existence (Exod. 21:30; 1 Sam. 12:3). But the word can also be used figuratively for the averting of a dreaded evil by some kind of performance (Isa. 43:3; Prov. 13:8; 21:18; Job 33:23 f.; 36:18). And consequently all that the person or community does to avert God's possible or actual wrath may be termed "covering;" whether it is a sacrifice (1 Sam. 3:14; Isa. 47:11), or a sacred gift like the poll-tax paid as "covering money" in connection with the God-defying census of the people (Exod. 30:11 ff.), or like the prize

¹⁹ Isa. 6:7; 22:14; Jer. 18:23; Ezek. 16:63; Pss. 65:4; 78:38; 79:9; Deut. 21:8.

money in case of unprecedented success (Numb. 31:50). The language of the sacrificial laws is most closely approached by passages like Numb. 25:13, where Phinehas, through his zeal both expressing and satisfying God's wrath, "covers" (כָּפַר עַל) the children of Israel, and thus effects that God no longer considers them doomed; or like Exod. 32:30, where Moses tries by prayer to "cover" (כָּפַר בְּעַד הַטָּאָה) the sin of the people. In all this the meaning of the word is unambiguous. God will no longer look at the sin; or man, by gifts, actions, or petitions, causes offended persons or the offended God to look no longer at the sin as demanding revenge.

The linguistic usage is quite different in the connection of the sacrificial laws, which is already very current with Ezekiel, chaps. 43, 45. Here the subject that "covers" is without exception the priest executing the rite. That which is to be "covered" is not the sin, but the person of him who renders the sacrifice, or else the sanctuary. And the means of "covering," if possible, is the holy sacrificial blood, whether more directly, or more externally brought into the presence of the deity. Only in exceptional cases other substances of the sacrifice are employed. Not a single bloody sacrifice is rendered to God where the proper dedication of the sacrificial food is not preceded by "covering." It must, therefore, be conceived of as a process distinct from the appropriation of the sacrifice by God, and making this possible. Nobody will deny that the cleansing and consecrative effect attributed to sacrificial blood since primeval periods of human history, that for generations was no longer an object of doubt or of direct religious sensation, somehow enters into consideration. Accordingly it appears self-evident in Lev., chaps. 14; 16 that a house defiled by leprosy, or the place of the sanctuary deprived of its consecration by Israel's imperfect cult, should be "cleansed" with sacrificial blood. Sacrificial blood has the power of abolishing uncleanness in a higher measure than either water, the cleansing element, or than the sacred ointment, Exod. 29:21, or than the stain-purging flame. But thereby only the outward circumference of the matter is described.

Why does the priest "cover" the offerers of sacrifice? Surely not, like God, to declare the sin no longer existent; but to restore the consecration of the person or the altar or the house, that a veil may be spread over their uncleanness (Ezek. 43: 18-27); in other words, to "consecrate," "cleanse," the offerer and the holy places. We, it cannot be denied, in this connection naturally think of forgiveness of sin, since to our mind nothing but our unpardoned sin could intervene between God and us in a separating and compromising way. Yet it has previously been pointed out that the Old Testament sacrifices—of which only a small portion has to do with sin, while ordinarily the community united with God merely expresses its gratitude and worship—cannot possibly deal with forgiveness of sin in our sense. We must step out of the circle of ideas of a purely ethical religion into the entirely different trend of thought of pious antiquity.

In Israel, as among all ancient nations, holiness, as we have seen, is chiefly a physical conception. It is dangerous and deadly. And the holier anything is, *i. e.*, the more immediate its contact with the deity, the more its presence threatens ruin to one coming out of the unsanctification of natural life. Whosoever touches God's ark unconsecrated, whatsoever creature of unclean lips sees God, incurs death. Special emphasis is placed upon this ancient conviction in the Levitical law caused by its enhanced supramundane conception of God. The whole institution of the Levites rests on the supposition that they, being consecrated, may touch the holy articles, contact with which would kill the people (Numb. 1: 53; 8: 10-19; 18: 5). The priests bear "the iniquity of holy things" (Exod. 28: 38). They eat the "most holy" parts of sacrifice at the holy place (Lev. 10: 17 ff.; Exod. 29: 38 ff.). Into the closest presence of God the high priest enters only with special consecration and on but one appointed day (Lev., chap. 16). The sanctuary kills anyone approaching it with "strange fire" (Lev. 10: 1). Whosoever without call arrogates to himself the official prerogatives of the priesthood is swallowed up by the earth (Numb. 16: 22 ff.). In this entire circle of ideas the contrast of the creature to God is

not conceived in our sense of consciousness of sin. Both, it is true, are related. Uncleanliness was in ancient times as much an ethical as a physical idea. Isaiah's designation of himself and his people as "of unclean lips" undoubtedly contained some consciousness of moral unworthiness. And the Old Testament is aware that "no clean one cometh out of the unclean" (Job 14:4; 13:26), and that man shaped in iniquity (Ps. 51:7) has an evil heart from his youth (Gen. 8:21; Ps. 130). Yet creatural unsanctification and moral imperfection are not clearly separated. The heavens are not clean before God; he findeth fault with his holy ones (Job 4:18 ff.). In the liturgical sphere of worship, indeed, the idea of creatural unsanctification, of distance between Creator and creature, is the prevailing one. This appears in the fact that the priest, who as a moral being is not a whit better, can still "cover" the offerer because on the ground of physical cleanness and faultlessness (Exod., chap. 29; Lev. 21:6 ff., 16 f.) through ceremonial consecrations he is qualified for God's presence and protected against its mortal effects.²⁰ In this need of "covering" is implied a perceptible feeling of moral insufficiency. Not in the sense, however, of the Christian consciousness of sin, but entirely comprehended in the general consciousness of creatural and natural uncleanness over against the holiness of God. Not a wrath of God already existing is to be revoked by "covering," but care is taken to avoid the provocation of God's wrath and the extermination of the unworthy object by his deadly holiness. Where man draws near with sin-offering and guilt-offering he doubly feels the need of such consecration. Not only as "unclean man," but also as "defiled by sin," he must needs be qualified for God's sight. The need itself every man feels, because he is "but dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27). The "covering," therefore, is nothing but the concealing of the uncleanness of the creature before the holy presence of God. In given cases it may be synonymous with "purifying" or "purging" of sin (כִּפּוּר),

²⁰ The Levites represent Israel's "firstborn," *i. e.*, God's holy due (Numb. 3:12; 8:16). They are consecrated, and so perform the ordinary services at the sanctuary, though not the sacrificial rite (18:2, 5), without the wrath of God coming upon Israel (1:53; 8:19).

namely, when the offerer seeks forgiveness in sacrifice (Lev 8:15). But in itself the word is parallel with "sanctify" (קָדַשׁ) and with "cleanse" (טָהַר). We correctly render it by "consecrate."

The priest consecrates the offerer. He, the authorized servant at the house of God, ushers others into God's presence. And he gives them "the wedding garment" in which they may come nigh unto God without danger, since it conceals their unsanctification (Numb. 8:19). The means of "covering," according to the primitive sentiments of man, primarily is sacrificial blood, the sacred cement between God and man; only, however, because it contains the life and is appropriated by God as a symbol of the communion into which he enters with the offerer. That it is only meant thus is proven by the circumstance that eventually also other sacred means of consecration serve the same end, provided they attest the communion of God. The eating of the flesh of sin-offering by the priest, in fact the whole sacrificial act, possesses "covering" power (Numb. 10:17; 15:35; *cf.* Exod. 29:33; Lev. 4:13-21; 5:11). In a like manner the sacred ointment "covers" the person on whom it is sprinkled (Lev. 8:30; 14:10; 10:7). The question, therefore, is not one of blood as a symbol of God's mortal wrath. Among the means of consecration which, like frankincense (Numb. 17:12), through their contact with God gain "covering" power, blood, to be sure, is central and decisive—just as it is most important among the means of purification by the side of water (*e. g.*, Exod. 30:19; Lev. 13:34, 54, 58), or of water with sacrificial ashes (Numb. 19:5 ff.).²¹ Consecrated through sacrificial blood man can draw nigh unto the sanctuary without being destroyed, as Levites and priests through higher consecrations are enabled to come into personal touch with holy things. That the community for which the sacrificial law was written entertained any kind of theory about

²¹Isaiah's sin is purged by fire from the heavenly altar (6:5). Compare the washing of garments in the blood of the Lamb. Purificatory means: Lev. 12:8; 14:9-20; 15:5, 29; Numb. 5:15 f.; 6:18; 28:22 ff.; 29:5; 31:22 f. Altar consecration: Exod. 29:37; Lev. 8:15. The sacred ointment sanctifies, Lev. 10:7. Fire cleanses, Numb. 31:22 f. The "covering" occurs before Yahweh's countenance, Lev. 19:22.

the power of sacrificial blood, or felt a need of such a thing, is excluded by the nature of the case.²² For millenniums human piety had regarded this "power of blood" as self-evident. Yet it was now generally felt not to be a matter of penalty or judgment, nor of purely physical communion with the deity, as the primitive ages had probably considered it. Because God wanted sacrifice, because it was favorably accepted by him, the victim's life presented to him in the blood is a cover concealing the offerer's unsanctification and impurity from God's holy sight.

This "covering" is the immediate preparation for the acceptance of the sacrifice by God. It is always preceded by cleansings of a more symbolical character. The apparel must be clean and festal, the body must be washed before man is admitted to the sacrifice (Exod. 30:20; Lev. 13:34, 54, 58; 14:8f., 46f.; 15:5 ff., 17ff.; 16:4, 23, 26, 28; Numb. 19:7, 8, 20f.; 31:19f., 24). And conditions of particular uncleanness, as that called forth by contact with demoniacal powers, by phases of death or sickness, by generation and child-birth, must be made ineffective through purifications and periods of consecration (2 Sam. 11:4; Exod. 19:15; 1 Sam. 21:5). The later Israel, it seems, found lustration necessary before every prayer (Judith 12:7, 9). Hence before ceremonial consecration was possible man must first put away that which in an unusual manner hindered his contact with the sacred. Since time immemorial the custom prevailed, when a sense of particular guilt oppressed the community, by fasting,²³ attitudes of grief, and lamentation to renounce such guilt in penitence and to qualify oneself again for religious intercourse with God (Joel 1:14; 2:12 ff.; Zech. 7:3 ff.; 8:19; cf. Judg. 20:23, 26; 1 Sam. 7:6; 31:13; 2 Sam. 12:16, 22; 1 Kings 21:9, 12, 27; Ps. 35:13).

Presuming the above, there seems no difficulty whatever in explaining the meaning of the sacrifices of the Law not directly pertaining to sin or guilt. Preëminent among these, according

²² The view is probably to be dismissed that an indemnity for the "killing" of the domestic animal was to be effected by this blood. The post-exilic temple community was no longer "naïve" enough for such a view.

²³ Fasting was perhaps originally a preparation for the sacred partaking of flesh (compare the fasting of Catholics before taking the sacrament).

to its religious importance, is burnt-offering (עֹלָה), now no longer considered a sin-purging sacrifice, but the regular sacrifice of the congregation of worshipers. According to the entire linguistic usage, "whole offering" (כֹּלֵל) is to be taken as synonymous with burnt-offering. The apparent exception in Ps. 51: 21 is explainable by poetic juxtaposition of parallel terms (1 Sam. 7: 9; Deut. 33: 10). To contend about the origin of the word "olah" would be of no significance for our task. The rendering "burnt-offering" (עֹלָה) is certainly preferable to the inexpressive term "that which ascends." The offerer consecrates the animal through laying on of hands. Then the priest performs the "covering" by sprinkling the blood, and sets in order the fire-wood. Whereupon the entire victim is offered in fire to the deity "for a sweet savor." Such burnt-offerings or holocausts are rendered on all festive occasions, alike at joyful feast and expiatory sacrifice (Exod. 10: 25; 32: 6; Lev., chap. 6; cf. Exod. 29: 10-19; Lev. 9: 2; 12: 6 ff.; 14: 19; 15: 14; Ezek. 45: 23). As Israel's continual sacrifice (תָּמִיד) they ascend on the altar, according to Ezekiel morning by morning (46: 13), according to the Law morning and evening (Lev. 6: 2 ff.; Exod. 29: 38; Numb. 28: 3; cf. 1 Chron. 16: 40), so that all special sacrifices are rendered to God "upon this burnt-offering," which in a sense is the basis of all. It is like an *opus operatum* sustaining the communion of the nation with God (Lev. 6: 6; 7: 2). When strangers to the nation show their reverence for Israel's God, it must be done through this sacrifice (Lev. 17: 8; 22: 18; Josephus, *C. Ap.*, 2: 16; *De bell. jud.*, 2: 17, 2). The animals offered had to be males, and entirely faultless (Lev. 1: 3, 10, 14). Only in case of need was the offering of doves valid.

There is here no question of particular expiation. Where that enters into consideration the burnt-offering cannot be rendered except on the basis of a sin-offering, that is, after the expiatory act (*e. g.*, Numb. 6: 9-15; 15: 22 ff.). Only when Israel or the pious stand in normal intercourse with God is this sacrifice permissible. And, moreover, it is the basis on which rest all special sacrifices of thanks, of prayer, of vows. It is the intrinsic ritual sacrifice, the expression of the worship which

Israel under all circumstances must dedicate to God, and which it can alone dedicate to him when its intercourse with him is uninterrupted. In the nature of the case, the offering congregation itself may not eat a portion of such gifts of worship. They are holy. Even the priest receives no share, as he did of the sin-offerings, or as was the case among the Carthaginians. God appropriates the entire sacrifice in fire.

The Law naturally does not think of blood-enchantment²⁴ and blood-communion. Remote to it is also the dread realism of early times, which regarded human sacrifice as the most efficient holocaust. Likewise the thought of God's physical partaking of the sacrifice—notwithstanding the previously mentioned metaphors to the contrary—can no longer be presupposed of the religious life of this period (Ps. 50 : 7 ff.). Israel can only have regarded pious and obedient worship, which is the spiritual content of the gift, as that element in fire-food which God accepts with pleasure. Hecatombs and extravagant sacrifices, therefore, are immaterial. The sacrifices prescribed are comparatively trifling, because they are essentially symbolical. Yet they must be rendered without stint and wilfulness, according to precise divine order, and of the best that man can give. Thus the meaning of this kind of sacrifice is *the willing and obedient expression of worship through gifts of reverence*. God accepting it avows communion with the nation, though not in the childlike mode of ancient times that Judg. 13 : 23 presupposes. The conception of ownership plays no important part in connection with these offerings, though man may naturally only make a gift to God of that which is his own (2 Sam. 24 : 23 ff.). The Law nowhere contemplates a present to God in the sense of a bribe. God demands worship, and this is rendered him in burnt-offering—as the gift of the subject is valued by the king, not as an increase of wealth, but as a symbolical expression of subjection and obedience (Exod. 23 : 15 ; Deut. 16 : 16).

Just as readily comprehensible is the numerous class of sacrifices corresponding with the primitive sacrificial meals and

²⁴ How realistic and magical the Law in other respects regarded the effect of holy things and words is seen in the law, Numb. 5 : 15 ff., that the drinking of water filled with curses shall ruin the guilty one (1 Sam. 14 : 24).

rendered partly of voluntary determination (נִדְבָה, Lev. 7:16), partly to express gratitude (תּוֹדָה, Lev. 7:12; 22:29; Ps. 27:6), partly in fulfilment of vows (נִדָּר, Lev. 22:18; Numb. 15:3). The Law calls them שְׁלָמִים, whether the word is indicative of the inviolate communion between God and the offerer (peace- and welfare-offerings), or, what seems more probable, of the rendering of something that was vowed or was otherwise to be discharged (שְׁלָם, Amos 5:22). Where simply a slaughter-sacrifice (זֶבֶחַ) is mentioned, this kind of offering is usually meant. It comprises only such sacrificial renderings as are freely determined by the community or the individual without legal regularity. Desiring or having experienced special divine aid, they offered such sacrifices to God in order to please him that he might help, or because he had helped. Here the old form of sacrifice is most faithfully preserved. After the offerer consecrated the animal, after the priest "covered" him and dedicated the blood, the fat alone was rendered to God in fire. Not as the "inner part" of the animal—for the fat tail of sheep also falls to God (Lev. 3:3-9)—but as the blossom of the flesh withdrawn from profane use. The rest of the animal's flesh also belonged to God, and was considered holy. Only the clean as God's guests might participate of the meal at the sanctuary. What was not eaten at the holy feast had to be burnt as "holy" in a clean place (Lev. 19:5). Not in the manner of a sacrifice—for the consumption by fire took place outside of the sanctuary—but in order to withdraw it from decomposition and all unholy use (Lev. 7:15 ff.; 19:5 f.; 22:30). God appropriated nothing further of the meal; the honorary portion due him (1 Sam. 9:24), the breast and right shoulder, was only symbolically offered and heaved or waved before him (תְּנוּפָה, תְּרוּמָה; cf. Exod. 25:2; 29:24; 35:5, 21, 24; 36:3, 6; 38:24, 29; Lev. 7:30; 9:21; 10:14; Numb. 8:10-15; 15:18). It then fell to the lot of his servants, the priests. And the rest of the flesh, with the appurtenances of a joyous meal, was partaken in religious table-fellowship by the offerers, whose guest might be any person standing in communion with them, or God's protégés, the Levite and stranger (Deut. 12:12, 13; 14:26; 16:11,

14). Thus they rejoiced "before God" (Exod. 18:12; Deut. 12:7, 12, 18; 14:24; 27:7). The aspect of the meal here figured so predominantly that even animals with slight faults were admitted as voluntary gifts. (Yet see Lev. 3:1-9; 22:22). From these feasts of joy sacred poetry has drawn its metaphors of religious bliss which enter deeply into the imagery of Christendom (Pss. 16:11; 22:25; 50:14; 56:12; 61:8; 64:10; 65:1-4; 100:2; 116:14, 18; 118:24; *cf.* Prov. 17:1).

Thoughts of penitency were utterly remote from these sacrifices. The offerer in reverential awe felt his need of consecration before he could rejoice in his gift at the sanctuary. Yet he came in the full glad sense of God's grace as a child of the people of the covenant who stood in the splendor of the light of God's countenance. Possible sin or guilt was previously washed away. He feared neither God's displeasure nor his judgment. How could a pious Israelite under the impulse to render his God a gratifying gift of thanks feel himself under divine wrath? True, he felt that he could approach God only when consecrated, like a subject entering the royal hall only when washed and properly attired. In this sense the Israel of that period, more than the early nation, perceived the immeasurable distance between the son of dust involved in the world and its business, and the celestial supramundane God, and reverently prayed the priest for "covering" through sacrificial blood. With our consciousness of sin and guilt, however, that had nothing to do, and it did not make the sacrificial meal an expiatory sacrifice.

Of course, that which had filled the hearts of the early Hebrews at such meals, the consciousness of actual table-fellowship and company with God by which the union with him was perceived and strengthened, was for the congregation of the second temple hardly more than a shadowy reminiscence. They thought of a blood-communion with God least of all. The blood at these meals was strictly excluded from the participation of the guests (Gen. 9:4; Deut. 12:16, 23; Lev. 17:10 ff.). Partaking of blood appeared so abominable to the pious (Ps. 16:4) that David already refuses to drink the water from the well at Bethlehem which was obtained by his friends in jeopardy of

their lives; it seems like "the blood" of his heroes, and he therefore pours it out unto God (2 Sam. 23:14-17). And sprinkling of the guests or the house with sacrificial blood was no longer customary. Israel undoubtedly performed these sacrifices without any theological considerations. What we artificially and by reflection approximate was in those times still the self-evident heritage of the piety of millenniums. That God was gratified with the rendered sacrifice ascending to him as ether seemed so indubitable that it was simply presumed. Therefore it was offered him as we offer him our prayer and holy sentiments. It was not offered as a present which he needed, or of costly material, but as an honorary gift to gratify and, in given cases, to make him favorably disposed to grant requests. The thought was hardly brought to mind whether the effect of this honoring rested only in the intention of the offerer or in the sacrifice as *opus operatum*. In all invitations to festive honoring both elements stand side by side. If Christianity after two millenniums is still but very partially clear as to the relation of both ideas, then surely the Israel of the Law must much less have been so. The compilers of the sacrificial Torah nowhere show that they ever thought upon the matter. And just as unprejudiced and void of reflection the guests must have felt their union with God in the sacrificial meal and the enjoyment of his grace, without inquiring if this glad consciousness rested upon the fact of the common meal itself or upon the communion of the heart with God expressed therein.

Up to this point the sacrifices of the Law are simply the expression of the worship of God and the desire to gratify him through honorary and hospitable gifts. A different meaning of sacrifice could be derived only from the precepts relating to sin-offering (חטאת) and guilt-offering (עולה). They were not customary, it seems, in early Israel. The people simply paid fines to the sanctuary. They first appear in Ezekiel (40:39; 43:19, 25; 44:26; 45:17, 20; 46:20), and Ps. 40:7 mentions them. It is probable that a transformation of the fine into sacrificial form took place in the interest of the cult. The laws concerning sin- and guilt-offering are not kept apart with systematic clearness

They rather leave the impression of compositions from various sacrifice rituals. As our task does not concern the differences of opinion attaching themselves to this question, we base our investigation upon the now prevailing view, according to which **זָטָח** in Lev. 5:1-13 is employed in a wider sense for guilt in general, and what is prescribed in the passage is materially included in sin-offering. For if guilt-offerings were here spoken of, they must be considered in absolute coincidence with sin-offerings both as to their occasion and their execution.

Neither sacrifice deals with what we call sin and guilt in its proper sense. For the entire sphere of the inner life there exists no sacrifice. Nor can a sacrifice be rendered for wilful transgression of divine commandments, in renunciation of obedience to God, as little as in civil life blood-money (**כֶּפֶר**) can be accepted for misdemeanor defiling the land, *e. g.*, for murder (Numb. 35:31-34). If anyone transgresses God's order "with a high hand" (**בְּיַד רָמָה**), "that soul shall be cut off from among his people" (Numb. 15:30). (The term in civil spheres expresses violent disregard of order in contrast with peaceable agreement (Exod. 14:8; Numb. 33:3).) Only "if anyone sins through error" (**בִּשְׂגָגָה**, Lev. 4:2, 22, 27; 5:1, 15, etc.) is there a sacrifice, for sins unconsciously and unintentionally committed through human weakness and short-sightedness, where evil will—the actual center of sin—is missing. Thus also for sins similar to unintentional slaying in civil spheres, for which the law knows cities of refuge, and which do not exclude the possibility of friendly adjustment with the injured kin. The greater portion of the sacrificial laws pertain to mere neglect of the precepts of cult or purification. Thus the law, Lev., chap. 16, deals only with fault remaining unnoticed in the ritual life of Israel during the year, by which the sanctuary and the intercourse of the community with God may have lost the necessary consecration. The case is similar in regard to the laws concerning contact with dead bodies, concerning leprosy, etc. In other respects they deal with possession of consecrated things, with careless vows, with concealing a curse, or sexual intercourse with a bondwoman, nowhere in the Old Testament coming under the head of sin. The Priestly

Law has a juristical and ritual, not an ethico-religious trend. Guilt-offerings, in the restricted sense of the word, **זֶבַח חַטָּאת**, form the simplest case. Concerning them the prescriptions are found Lev. 5:14 ff.; 7:1 ff.; 14:12; Numb. 5:5 ff.; 6:12; 18:9 (Ezek. 40:39; 42:13; 44:29; 46:20). Their distinguishing peculiarity lies in the fact that they are rendered for covert, faithless action (**מִעַל**),²⁵ *i. e.*, in event of the violation of the rights of sanctuary or of man. If a Nazarite is interrupted in his vow by contact with some dead thing (Numb. 6:9 f.), or if anybody has profaned the sanctuary (Lev. 5:15; *cf.* 1 Sam. 6:3, 19), or if by curse or vow or oath God's holy name is dishonored, then "guilt" against God is in question, an infringement of the rights of the sanctuary. And guilt against the neighbor is in question if he, according to Lev. 5:14 ff.; 19:20, and Numb. 5:6, is injured in his right of ownership, under which comes the right of the master to his female slave, or if he is injured by denial of a pledge or by the withholding of lost things found. Every other distinction of the two kinds of sacrifice proceeding from "recognition of the offense in the light of God's penalty," or from "gravity of the sin," founders on the simple contents of the laws in Lev., chaps. 4 and 5.

In early Israel, as has been mentioned, a fine had to be paid to the sanctuary in cases of the above character, besides what was demanded by civil order, just as among other nations in addition to the weregild, which the injured party received, a penalty for breach of peace had to be paid into the public treasury. All of that is now ritually regulated. He that is "guilty" must first make amends for the damage done and "add the fifth part more thereto" (Lev. 5:16; 6:5; Numb. 5:7). If there is no person to whom restitution can be made, the sum falls to the sanctuary (Numb. 5:8). Then the offender by way of penalty for the violation of the divine order of the community must furnish to the

²⁵ Thus in Josh. 7:1 Achan's seizure of goods under the ban is **מִעַל**, yet intentional, for which there is no sacrifice, but only extermination. In a like manner the guilt of Eli's sons, who imposed on God's right in the sanctuary, cannot be expiated through sacrifice or gift (1 Sam. 3:14). Guilt-offering in connection with cleansing from leprosy (Lev., chap. 14) can only be artificially included here through the intermediary thought of an obligation to the community.

sanctuary a victim estimated according to a definite money value (Lev. 5 : 15, 18, two shekels), which plainly represents a fine. In case of violation of holiness, as with the Nazarite, the guilt-offering alone is to be rendered. The victim (אֵיל הַנִּפְּרִים, Numb. 5 : 8 ; אֵיל הָאֲשָׁם, Lev. 5 : 16) is treated in the same manner as in the sin-offering. It belongs to the sanctuary. The priest must eat it as "most holy" after the blood is assigned to God and the fat is burned (Lev. 7 : 1 ff.). Here the old fine is simply changed into the less offensive and more symbolical form of a sacrificial gift. The blood and fat must be offered to God, since every victim is so dedicated to him. The body of the animal becomes "most holy;" for it is dedicated to the sanctuary as a penalty. That God does not appropriate it to himself in fire as burnt-offering, but assigns it to his servants, follows, it would seem, from the circumstance that the old fine—which, to the displeasure of the prophets, was a good source of revenue for the priests (Amos 2 : 7 f.; Hos. 4 : 8)—at least in this limited way was further to benefit them. "Every man's hallowed things" are theirs (Numb. 5 : 9 f.). There is as little occasion to think of a "penal death" of the victim or of "substitution" in connection with these guilt-offerings as in connection with the money formerly paid to the sanctuary. It is a fine making amends for the violation of right in accordance with the general custom of ancient humanity. Antiquity very realistically applied the measure of material value to such objects as honor and life.²⁶ Thus our inquiry is exclusively to be limited to sin-offering, which, according to its sacrificial form, is in fact determinative also for guilt-offering.

Sin-offering does not purport to render satisfaction for injured rights of God or neighbor. Where the gracious communion of God with the nation, or with a single member of the commonwealth, is made impossible through opposition to divine ordinances, sin-offering would restore this communion, effect forgiveness of sin. But only in a small, circumscribed sphere of contradiction to God's will is this offering applicable: in case of sinning through ignorance and weakness, without evil will, where

²⁶ The קֶסֶף הַנִּפְּרִים, Exod. 30 : 16, intended to avert God's wrath after the census of the people, still very externally expresses the early conception of penalty.

sin and ceremonical uncleanness still indistinguishably blend. Although early Israel expected to purchase pardon with burnt-offerings for religious unfaithfulness and civil misdemeanor, that was no longer to be thought of in Israel's religion after the preaching of the great prophets. The congregation which read the prophetic writings and chanted the psalms knew well enough where the guilty nation, where the disquieted conscience of the sinner, had to look for solace, namely, in the free grace of God ready to forgive penitent sinners, and in subjection to God's will, in spirit and truth, and confession and renunciation of sin (Pss. 32 and 51, שׁוּב). God wills, not the sinner's death, but his conversion (Ezek., chap. 18). There is forgiveness with him that he may be feared (Ps. 130:4). In his covenanted love to Israel, his servant and son, lies the inexhaustible fountain of grace. This grace has nothing to do with sacrificial gifts. When Israel thought of mediators, which were capable of regaining God's favor, forfeited through Israel's misdemeanor, they were not the priestly functionaries. They were heroes, like Phinehas, reëstablishing God's holy order by zealous acts (Numb. 25:4), or men of prayer, like Moses,²⁷ who staked their own position of grace with God in love for their people (Exod. 32:11, 32 ff.). Fathers, like King David, stood security that God would not utterly nor forever turn from his people. "God's Servant," who gives up his innocent life in faith and obedience to the divine will and in sacrificing love to God's community, renders the real surety to God, and is the true penalty for Israel (Isa., chap. 53). Israel could not think of the sin-offerings of the Priestly Law. These only applied where God's love indissolubly held fast the communion with his nation, not where misdemeanor had turned him away in anger. They purported only to produce forgiveness for that which human frailty, even with good and legal intentions, ever and anon falls short in concerning the complete fulfilment of divine law. They desired steadily to restore the consecration it needed to the holy place, where God's intercourse with his people was consummated, and which was perennially darkened

²⁷ Exod. 32:11. Moses seeks to smooth God's face by allusion to his honor involved in Israel's. With gifts the countenance is calmed (Prov. 19:6).

through an earth-born and erring nation's profane manner and unrecognized faults of worship. From the sacrificial laws of the priestly Torah nothing is to be learned concerning the doctrine of the atonement and the comprehension of the significance of Christ's death, natural as it was for the popular devotional language of early Christianity to facilitate for "babes" the perception of the wonder of the cross by allusions to these ordinances.

God in his covenant of grace will pardon and annul separation on Israel's or the Israelite's approach with sin-offering, where they see their religious communion with God—that is, the normal relation between God and his community—interrupted through no intention of their own to dissolve it, but where, through contact with unclean or demoniacal things, through unintentional transgression of the prescriptions of cult and sacred custom, or through sickness (Lev., chap. 15), they feel defiled. It is, therefore, not a matter of violated rights, for which a penalty must be paid. The money value of the victim is not fixed. But the closer the connection of the sinner with God, *i. e.*, the holier he has been, the greater the defilement is accounted, and the greater also must the offering be. Its magnitude is graded from the bullock, which the community or the priest gives, down to the he-goat, which the average Israelite renders (Lev. 4: 13, 22, 27; 16: 3, 5). And as a sign that the symbolical character of the sacrifice prevails over the material value of the gift, the sin-offering of the poor may diminish to a pair of doves (Lev. 4: 28; Numb. 5: 15, 25), aye, a simple flour-offering (Lev. 5: 7–11) without oil or frankincense, in correspondence with the character of penitency. Defilement of a particularly consecrated person requires stronger cleansing. The law, however, in no way distinguishes between physical and ethical defilement.

The victim, as in all kinds of sacrifice, is consecrated by the offerer through imposition of hands (Exod. 29: 10; Lev. 4: 4, 15, 24, 28). The priest performs the "covering" by means of the sacrificial blood, which here most strikingly appears as the center of the act. At the consecration of defiled holy places (Lev. 16: 14, 15, 19; *cf.* 4: 7, 17, 25, 29 *f.*; 8: 15; 9: 9; Exod.

29:12) the blood is brought to the places themselves. The priest dips his finger in the blood and rubs it over the place requiring consecration, either the holy of holies with its place of consecration (כִּפְּרִית), or the sacred veil, or the brazen altar (Lev. 4:6, 17, 32). The blood is else simply sprinkled or poured out. The sinner himself receives it only in case of leprosy (Lev. 14:4 ff.), where a direct cleansing takes place. The fat of the victim ascends to God as sacrificial odor (Exod. 29:13; Lev. 4:9, 10, 31; 7:3 ff.). Its body is "most holy" (קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים). Therefore the "consecrated ones," the priests, must eat it at the holy place. That appears as their privilege (Lev. 6:10, 18, 22; 7:6; 14:13), but it is also their duty. They thereby guard Israel against sacramental danger and so complete the act of sin-offering. Therefore they are diligently urged to overcome the natural horror of such enjoyment of the "most holy" (Lev. 10:16-20; cf. 9:11). But when the priests themselves bring the sin-offering, and thus are temporarily unholy, or when the whole congregation, to which the priests belong, renders it, then the flesh of the victim must be burned at a place outside of the sanctuary (Lev. 4:11, 12, 21; 6:23; 9:11; 16:27; cf. 7:15). Not as a sacrifice, for it does not occur at the place of sacrifice; nor in the manner of burying something dead. Only in very rare instances is the custom of burning the dead known in Israel (1 Sam. 31:12; Amos 2:1). It is simply a matter of withdrawing the "most holy" from every desecration, and at the same time averting the danger concealed therein. That done, the offerer has been forgiven (נִסְלַח לוֹ, Lev. 4:20, 26, 31; 5:13-18; 10:26). Occasional and faded traces only of the primitive customs of humanity at piacular sacrifices remain. Piacula of strange animals, which rest on totemism, are an abomination to the Law (Isa. 65:3; 66:3, 17; Ezek. 8:10, 12). Dreadful piacular sacrifices where-with the angry deity was to be conciliated are here excluded. Reminiscences of piacular rites elsewhere in vogue appear only in the admittance of female victims (Lev. 4:28, 32; 5:6), in the preference for the he-goat (Lev. 4:23; 16:7), and in the absence of frankincense and oil. The partaking of the sacrifice is

limited to the priests acting as holy representatives of the community. Likewise the touching with sacrificial blood, except where an outward and, as it were, material defilement is washed away. Thus the process and the ultimate end of the sacred performance are plainly visible. It is only a question as to how the Israelites thought to achieve the end by this process. As to that, we are not surprised if the answer cannot be an incontrovertibly definite one, or if it is decisive as to what it excludes, but not in what it affirms. For the sacrificial law does not aim at theological precision. It desires only to fix the exact technique of the performance. And it simply presupposes the views of antiquity developed in millenniums, into which we can transpose ourselves but artificially and imperfectly.

It is manifest, without further proof, that "covering" here means nothing else than in other sacrifice, and yet attains a special enhanced importance. If natural unsanctification and uncleanness must be concealed through sacramental means of consecration, that God "see" them not, then impurity arising from sin, and singularly defiling man, has double need of "covering." Without it man, in approaching the altar, would to attract God's wrath secure his own destruction. Thus it is readily understood why on the Day of Atonement the sanctuary itself is "covered" with the blood of sin-offering.²⁸ It is defiled in God's sight through errors of cult and through the unconsecrated multitude daily drawing nigh. Similarly the holy blood of sin-offering must conceal the uncleanness of one defiled by leprosy before he can be admitted into the religious community and appear at the sanctuary. It is likewise intelligible why the priest at every sin-offering solemnly performs the "covering." Perhaps remnants of primitive usage no longer intelligible lie in the touching of the leper with blood of the sin-offering, and in the requirement that the priest who represents the community must dip his finger in the blood and eat the flesh of the sin-offering. For formerly the communion of the god with his worshipers was not only strengthened and guaranteed, but, if necessary, established anew by the common meal, especially by joint participation

²⁸ This appears even stronger in Ezek. 45 : 18 ff.

of the blood. But the Law was surely not conscious of such conceptions. Sin-offering has wholly lost the character of a religious meal. The effect of blood, inasmuch as not presumed without further reflection, can be understood only from the entire course of sacrifice. We need but bear in mind that among all nations of antiquity expiatory sacrifices were not qualitatively distinguished from the rest, but merely figured as a particular form of the combined sacrificial performance. The same means by which the ancients desired to preserve and strengthen the favor of the gods also appeared fit to secure and regain their injured or forfeited grace. The same must here have been the case. The sacrificial blood, which the son of earth dedicates that he may come before God's countenance without injury, cleanses from particular defilement of sin, as water, which consecrates for the joyous feast, in the special event of sacrificial danger, also has a purifying effect.

What, according to the faith of the congregation of the second temple, does sin-offering signify, by means of what does it effect forgiveness of sin?

Excluded, because contrary to the entire conception of antiquity and the character of the Priestly Law, appears the view that the victim's death and approximation to God are, as it were, a mystic symbolical representation of the process accomplished with the soul of the sinner, namely, that it dies according to its sinful naturalness and, having now become clean, is received by God into his holy presence. That may have been the object of mysteries like those of the Mithra cult. But touching these sacrifices it is utterly inconceivable. For the victim is offered by the sinner as an expiatory gift, it is to be the means of procuring his forgiveness, its blood "covers" him before God. Thus nobody could be led to think that the victim was intrinsically a symbol of the sinner and its sacrifice merely an exhibition of a transaction between God and the offender, with which, at bottom, it was entirely disconnected. If the victim really represents the offender, its juridically substitutionary death must be considered as the infliction of punishment upon the sinner.

This thought did not seem so strange in ancient times as it would from our ethical point of view. The idea of punishment is originally not very distinct. If the community is defiled by offenses, which incur divine wrath, it puts the evil out of its midst (Lev. 24 : 13). As a solidarily associated unit it executes the ban upon the offender and his kindred, and thus annuls the curse which the offense might bring down upon it (Numb. 35 : 33 f.; Deut. 19 : 10; Josh. 7 : 24 ff.). Accordingly it seems natural that the curse of an offense should cut off the innocent ones with their kindred (2 Sam. 21 : 5 ff.), and that in some events the extermination of a single transgressor representing the community should atone for the whole tribe, because the ban has been executed (Numb. 25 : 4, 7, 13). It likewise seems natural in Gen., chap. 22, that the animal victim should be accepted by God instead of the sacrifice of Abraham's son. It would, to be sure, be a mistake in the historical apprehension of the sacrificial law to reckon with modern ideas of personal punishment and moral responsibility of the individual. Yet the cases just recited in no way admit of comparison with the point in question in sin-offering. The victim (Gen., chap. 22) was not to exempt man from capital punishment. For Abraham had no occasion whatever to think of divine judgment. Instead of the greater gift which God might demand and which piety would not refuse him, God accepts the smaller, because it is agreeable to him.²⁹ In this sense the animal victim—in some cases symbolically stamped with an image of man—has supplied the place of human sacrifice among most of the civilized nations. In the above quoted examples men do not suffer capital punishment for others. They fall under the ban according to the organic coherence of the kin, because of which the iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children (Exod. 20 : 5), and the individual, even if personally innocent, is seized by the guilt of the whole body, and because of which the kindred may be exempt if the threatening curse should burst upon one to whom the guilt particularly adheres. That by imposition of hands the sacrificer, as it were, transfers his sin to the victim,

²⁹ Thus an animal, forfeited to God and not sacrificeable, can be redeemed by a less costly one. And a human being forfeited to God must be redeemed (Exod. 34 : 19, 20).

is a presumption in contrast with the general employment of this symbolism in all kinds of sacrifice and consecrations (Numb. 8:10-12; 27:18, 20, 23). By laying on of hands the man or animal is consecrated to purposes of cult. The nature of these purposes is simply the result of given circumstances. Thus imposition of hands occurs for purposes of expiation, even if (like Lev., chap. 16) no special confession of sin is uttered. Consequently the victim becomes but a means of expiation, not the bearer of the sacrificers' sin.

The conception of vicarious suffering of penalty on the part of the victim in sin-offering proves inadmissible in every direction. If the animal were the bearer of the curse of sin, it would have to embody, as it were, the contradiction to God. But its blood comes before God's countenance as "most holy." Its fat is rendered as a "sweet savor." And its body is most holy, similar to the meal-offering (Lev. 2:3, 9 f.; 6:18 ff.), may alone be eaten by the priest in the holy place, and, where that is impossible, must be saved from all desecration through fire in a clean place. A horror indeed adheres to its flesh (Lev. 9:8-15; 10:16-20).³⁰ But it is that horror connected with paramount holiness threatening ordinary life with ruin and death.³¹ The sacrificer of the sin-offering, particularly on the Day of Atonement, must first wash himself before he can again enter the congregation of worshipers (Lev. 16:21, 24, 26, 28; 6:19-23; Numb. 19:7-10, 21 ff.). But not because that which he has touched is unclean or accursed—for the sacrificial blood rendered to God has a similar effect (Lev. 6:20)—but because the "most holy" defiles, *i. e.*, infects with dangerous power. Man must rid himself of this infection by symbolical cleansings and change of garment before he may again mingle with the people without endangering others. For the same reason vessels in which holy food is prepared must be either cleansed or broken (Lev. 6:20 f.). Even the Law compares "most holy" and "unclean"

³⁰ קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים, Lev. 4:10; 6:10, 18-23; 7:1, 6; 10:17; 14:13.

³¹ Whosoever touches it becomes forfeit to the sanctuary, יִקְדָּשׁ (Lev. 6:20; cf. 11). At the sacrificial meal also the touching of holy things by unclean incurs extermination (Lev. 7:20 f.; 11:47).

things according to the prevailing "physical" religious sentiment of antiquity.³² Either may disqualify for participation in the regular congregation of worshipers. The only difference, as previously shown, is that every unclean thing, because infected by powers loathsome to the deity, in itself incapacitates one for the communion of worshipers (Hag. 2:12), while the thing "most holy," permeated by the majesty of the god himself, conveys its destructive effect where a man is not protected against it by special consecration.³³ The flesh of the sin-offering with all forms of unbloody sacrifice shares the character of things "most holy," which are withdrawn from the enjoyment of the offerer as food for the priests, and this of itself forbids the idea of a filling with the curse of sin (Lev. 2:3, 9, 10 f.; 5:13; 6:11).

The slaughter of the victim in this sacrifice, as little as in any other, signifies an act of punishment executed upon it. How can one think of the offerer's "deathworthiness" in connection therewith? Where God's mortal wrath actually rests upon a person no sin-offering is possible. And what consciousness of guilt, however exaggerated and enhanced, would think that in a community enjoying God's grace a woman that had borne a child (Lev. 12:1), or a person who unintentionally had touched a corpse or carcass (Lev. 5:2), or a house wherein dwelled leprosy, or a being otherwise afflicted with sickness (Lev. 15:15, 28), deserved capital punishment? Corresponding with the naturalistic notion of antiquity, we feel that it is rather a matter of uncleanness which must be abolished.³⁴ The reverse is absolutely impossible. And even if it were conceivable, the victim, as in all other sacrifices, is slain in order to bring its blood to God. Its blood must not coagulate, must accordingly

³² Synchronous was the rise of a sense for magic and sorcery everywhere in Asia.

³³ The antithesis of קֹדֶשׁ else is הָחֹל, that of טָמֵא, טְהוֹר (Lev. 10:10; 11:47). But the avoidance of things unclean is deduced from the holiness of God and his people, Lev. 11 (44).

³⁴ טָמֵא וְאִשָּׁם, Lev. 5:2-4. The woman is unclean after her confinement, man after sexual intercourse, and the body demoniacally touched by death or sickness. Every "uncovered" thing in a house in which a person has died becomes unclean (Numb. 19:17; cf. 31:19 ff.).

be an expression of life and not of death. God wants no dead thing upon which capital punishment has been inflicted. The dead thing is unclean. He desires the life as rendered to and appropriated by him. The altar is no place of execution.³⁵ Wherever a natural object becomes forfeit to the deity, and thus holy, it is forfeit to extermination. The firstborn when not redeemed must die; not because God punishes it, but because his majesty consumes the earthly life in appropriating it (Exod. 13:13, 15; 22:28 f.). Ban (חֵרֶם) and becoming holy are contiguous in many relations.³⁶

Moreover, if sin-offering had anything in common with the thought of a vicarious penal death, it should be performed as slaughter of a victim under all circumstances. But as a flour-offering (Lev. 5:11), notwithstanding that it is exceptional, can take the place of the animal, it is impossible to cling to such a view.

Nor is sin-offering to be considered a payment in an actual sense, as guilt-offering is. Every sacrifice of course comprises a gift, a rendering to the deity. But not every gift is a payment. The sin-offerings prescribed in the Law are insignificant as to their actual value, and can be diminished so as to become devoid of value. The chief offering on the Day of Atonement is a he-goat. And if that were explainable from the insignificant character of the sins here entering into consideration, the circumstance still remains decisive that neither a definite value of the offering is prescribed, as in guilt-offering, nor does the magnitude of the gift increase with the wealth of the sinner or the gravity of the sin. It only increases with the theocratic dignity of the sinner. The priest precedes the prince (Lev. 4:14, 22). The measure of defilement (of injured holiness) is the measure of increase for the sacrifice. Its essence must therefore lie in purification (the extermination of defilement), and not in penalty payable to an offended God. Guilt-offering

³⁵ Among the Hindoos the slaughter of the victim is not accounted as a slaying of some living thing, but as a dedication of life to the deity, and therefore not only permissible, but also meritorious.

³⁶ Lev., chaps. 27, 28. Everything under the ban is "most holy" and irredeemable. Every *תועבה* is also *חֵרֶם*, Deut. 7:26.

transfers us to the sphere of ancient civil rights. These allow the injured kindred, if agreeable, a fine (נָטָר, Exod. 21:30; Numb. 35:32) at the hands of the offender, when his deed does not, as an imprudent violation of the social sanctity, defile the land and make necessary the ban. The affair may thus be mutually settled. In addition, a penalty for breach of peace flows to the public fund. Relative to that, in a somewhat wider sense, is the supposition that gifts smooth the face of the angry (Gen. 32:21; 1 Sam. 13:12; 2 Kings 13:4; Ps. 45:13),³⁷ and that redemption of one fallen into slavery may be effected by a ransom (Ps. 49:8; Isa. 43:3, 4; Prov. 21:18; cf. Exod. 30:12; Numb. 31:50, פָּדָה, קָנָה, גָּאֹל). Sin-offering, on the other hand, leads us into the circle of purificatory rites. That is seen in its most striking employment after the confinement of a woman (Lev., chap. 12), on the Day of Atonement, and at the leprous house (Lev., chaps. 14 and 16),³⁸ where defiled places and persons are cleansed through sin-offering, as the altar originally was made most holy by it (Exod. 29:36 f.). And it is further seen in the consecration of Levites and priests (Numb., chap. 8; Exod., chap. 29), who as ordinary fallible men are first cleansed from uncleanness by sin-offering before the particular consecration is conferred. Thus two thoughts here concur which to our conception fall apart: God's pardon, through which the intercourse with him is established, and abolition of uncleanness which excludes from intercourse with God.

Sin-offering is a purificatory rite (Lev. 12:8).³⁹ The entire sacrifice consists in what at other offerings is only the preparatory part, namely, the "covering." And it is this in a particularly intensive manner, since a defilement of physico-ethical nature is to be abolished, besides the general human uncleanness. The entire sacrificial course, including the eating of the sacrificial flesh by the priest (Lev. 10:16 ff.) and the rendering of the sacrificial cake (Lev. 5:11), is purifying. Hence the real

³⁷ Of God, 1 Sam. 13:12; Zech. 7:2.

³⁸ "Shall be clean" is the result, Lev. 16:30 ff.

³⁹ Accordingly the ashes of the red heifer (Numb. 19:7 ff.), rendered as sin-offering, act as a purifier when added to the water.

ground of purification is that *God accepts the sacrifice and thereby enters into communion with the sinner*, granting him actual pardon, and that *man in this offering, enjoined by God as the embodied prayer of a penitent, expresses his confession, his regret, his petition for forgiveness.*⁴⁰

But the actual purifier here, as in all animal sacrifice, is blood, the *materia sacramenti*. Though water takes away uncleanness and qualifies for religious communion, and in special cases water with the ashes of the victim, or sacred oil (Lev. 8:10), or frankincense, effects purification, still the intrinsic "holy" means of purging away uncleanness is sacrificial blood. Why it was so the men of the Levitical law never asked. The highly civilized nation of the second Jerusalem surely no longer understood the feelings of their herd-possessing ancestors in respect to the blood of the domestic animal which in the sacred meal united the clan and its deity in one common life. The cleansing power of sacrificial blood was regarded by all nations of antiquity as an inherited ancestral faith, a primitive, and therefore divinely implanted, intuition of man, which no one doubted and about which no one entered into theological speculation. "The blood is the life. Blood must be withheld from all profane use and can only subserve sacred purposes of cult. In accordance with divine decree, blood shall 'cover' man that God may not view his uncleanness." These are the established articles of faith upon which the thought of sin-offering is erected. In the sacrificial meal, in the wetting of the priest with sacrificial blood (Lev. 8:23; Exod. 29:20), in the sprinkling of this blood upon objects which have become unclean (Exod. 29:36), in circumcision, in the Passover, and in the blood of the covenant there perhaps lurk reminiscences of the original purpose to unite God and man through consecrated life in blood, and to insure this union or eventually to restore it. In the sin-offering,

⁴⁰ If God did not impart grace to the penitent within his covenant with sinners, sin-offering would not cleanse. The God of the Old Covenant does not allow his pardon to be purchased. This religion no longer recognizes charms which through magic force could appease God's wrath. The entire transaction rests on the supposition that God will forgive, *i. e.*, regard the uncleanness as no longer in existence, if only the sinner in prescribed sacrifice expresses his penitence and petition for pardon.

however, that is but an unconscious background. The sinner in his sacrifice renders the confession: "I am wrong, and God is right; I am unclean and desire to be cleansed." God, in accepting the sacrifice, declares: "I will pardon the penitent and not regard his uncleanness." The blood, as sacramental center of the offering, expresses that a hindrance to the communion with God, namely, uncleanness, has been removed. As purifier it "covers" uncleanness and sin. The "garment washed in the blood" is the attire in which the community may approach God. The victim is slaughtered, not that it may die or be punished, but that its life, as holy and appropriated by God, may mediate the union between him and the sinner.

Thus the sacrifices of the Levitical law in various respects seem fragments of primitive and more vital rites. Semi-conscious ideas of the religious life of primitive times pervade them. Sacrifice is forced out of the center of individual piety. It has become essentially a liturgic performance of the community, and accordingly rather a mysterious symbol of Israel's communion with God, in which the individual participated by faith. The religious life of the land and of the dispersion manifested itself in the synagogue without sacrifice, through prayer, exposition of Scripture, and preaching. Plenty of pious people may scarcely have observed the change from faith in the sacrifice continually offered in Jerusalem to faith in the sacrifice on Calvary, and of the cult into prayer and preaching of salvation in word and sacrament. Nor did non-Christian Israel after the destruction of the sanctuary have difficulty in finding a surrogate for sacrifice in the possession of the Law.

The sacrificial laws of the middle books of the Pentateuch seem like an earnestly intended restoration of old sacred forms which the religious life of Israel had in reality outgrown—like an attempt to express the antique faith, which had sprung from the soil of materialistic and mystic religion, in the mold of ethico-spiritual piety. These laws were full of significance as a preventive against Israel's sinking into the cult and magic of the highly developed paganism of that period. They, however, appear lifeless and juristic as a substitute for the daily sacrificial

cult that once filled the religious life of the Hebrew clans and tribes. They are of little significance as a whole for the real moral and spiritual relation of the nation or individual to God, least of all for the doctrine of the atonement. Faith in God's loving relation to his community and his willingness to grant penitent sinners forgiveness had long since ceased to be joined to offerings and gifts. But the religious life of the community, as centering in the national sanctuary, had by means of these laws a definite and completed regulation which was honored and cherished as God's holy commandment. The intercourse of Israel with God in sacrifice gave to the nation the consciousness of a continual and ever-renewed communion of grace. Therefore the nation's most serious endeavor was by sin-offering and purification immediately to make good every ritual error, that might interrupt or render inefficient this intercourse and hinder the holy God in his communion with Israel (Lev. 15:31; Numb. 19:17-20). Man was thought incapable of noting always such faults and secret sins—for who can discern errors? (Pss. 19:12; 90:8). So the entire religious life of the nation had annually to be atoned for (Lev., chap. 16; *cf.* Ezek. 45:18-20)—just as the Roman census atoned for the faults committed in religious duty during the year.

That the meaning of the sacrificial laws has been correctly presented may most clearly be seen where various forms of sacrifice coincide on festive occasions. While "covering" through sacrificial blood forms the beginning of every other sacrifice, in the case where an additional sin-offering is rendered this itself is the "covering" or beginning of the celebration, through which the company of worshipers are enabled to approach the sanctuary without fear of divine wrath (Numb. 28:22-30; 29:5, 11; 6:11; Lev. 8:14 ff.; 9:6, 15; Exod. 29:35).

Where no particular propitiation is in question, burnt-offering, as the unceasing worship of God, is the presupposition of undisturbed community of cult. All sacrifices for particular reasons voluntarily rendered to God are rendered on the basis of the burnt-offering, "burned on it" (Numb. 28:3, 11; Lev. 6:1 ff.). If, on the contrary, a sin-offering is rendered in an act of cult,

it must precede the burnt-offering and the sacrificial meal. Uncleaness separating from God must be removed before man can worship and rejoice before God (Exod. 29:10 f.; Lev. 8:14 f.; 9:7; Numb. 6:13). Sacrificial meals are always the conclusion of composite sacrifices at the feasts. For God's table-companions can only be the consecrated ones who have properly shown their worship and reverence (Lev. 9:18; Numb. 6:17; and often).

Israel's faith in the cleansing power of the sin-offering is peculiarly expressed in the law concerning the Day of Atonement (Lev., chap. 16),⁴¹ as an explanative parallel of which, in a smaller sphere of the law, Lev., chap. 14 (relating to purification from leprosy), may serve. In both instances two animals are selected for the purpose of the purificatory act. But only one of them is actually rendered as a sin-offering. The objects requiring purification are wetted with the blood and thus "covered." Then follows a symbolical transaction expressing that the consecrated place is now clean and has no room for defilement. The second animal is sent away from the consecrated spot into the unclean world. According to Lev. 16:10, 21 f., it is sent to Azazel into the wilderness. It carries Israel's uncleanness (as, for example, the leper's and that of the leprous house) out of the community as no longer existing in God's sight, as, according to Zech., chap. 5, the nation's sin which God has forgiven is carried into the unclean land of Babylon. Over this animal the high priest confesses Israel's sin, which it has now renounced and of which it is cleansed. It seems to have been consecrated to its service as piaculum with the blood of the sin-offering, though the text is not very clear.⁴² Thus the humble confession of the congregation's sin is clearly expressed, and at the same time the glad assurance that after purification of the holy place Israel's "sin" is of no importance and cannot separate from God's loving fellowship.

⁴¹ On this day, which deals with sins of cult, the sin-offering of the priest is greater than that of the whole congregation (3:5). The sanctuary shall be consecrated (vs. 16).

⁴² The bird remaining alive, Lev. 14:6, 51, is dipped into water consecrated by sacrificial blood. Lev. 16:10 thus only seems intelligible. For *לְכַסֵּר עֲלָיִר* can only refer to the animal presented to God, and therefore presupposes some kind of touching of it by the sacrificial blood of the other animal.